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#### Western Communication is on the brink of implosion – oversaturated by endless signs and images. Reality is dead, information is dissuasive, and truth no longer exists – any critical content of the Aff is over-coded by the hyperreal form of communication.

Artrip and Debrix 18, Ryan E., and François Debrix. "The viral mediation of terror: ISIS, image, implosion." Critical Studies in Media Communication 35.1 (2018): 74-88. (Philosophy and Political Science at Guilford College and Elon University)//Elmer

Mediation and the virality of the image A crucial feature of the contemporary media system (and its accompanying global circulation of images) is oversaturation. This oversaturation of media **is characterized by** so-called **viral** patterns of production, **dissemination, and consumption** of content, often achieved through globally networked digital platforms. Enabled by a seemingly exponential growth of networks and by ever-widened thresholds of social connectivity, digital technologies have ushered in an unprecedented intensity of information production. Today’s global mediascape is perhaps best defined by its immeasurable volume of communicative activity, constituted by an interminable accumulation/circulation of representational images (thus, it may be more apt to call it a global media circuitry). In order to theorize the relevance of the accumulative/circulatory effects of representation taking place throughout contemporary media processes, we turn to Jean Baudrillard’s theory of simulation. According to Baudrillard’s theory of simulation, images have a tendency to “exceed” their original or intended function to represent, reflect, or describe some facet of reality. Images eventually overtake, overwhelm, and erase the possibility of originality or referential certainty. For Baudrillard (1983b), this takes place over the course of four “successive phases of the image” (p. 11). The first stage corresponds to the representational function of the image in its most ideal form. It describes a moment in the development of western thought—less likely an actual historical moment than one retroactively imposed on or assumed by western thought itself—whereby any reality can be perfectly reflected by an image. A second stage emerges as a response or opposition to the notion of representational faithfulness. It introduces the possibility of representational malfunction (often deployed intentionally), and it relates to what Baudrillard (1993) refers to in Symbolic Exchange and Death as “the counterfeit,” something that, Baudrillard claims, is “the dominant schema in the ‘classical period’” (p. 50). With the counterfeit, the image does not accurately represent anymore but rather “masks or perverts a basic reality” (Baudrillard, 1983b, p. 11). Representation gives way to distortion. Or, to put it somewhat differently, representation as distortion can now mislead, hide, cheat, dissimulate, or facilitate the production (and valuation) of lies and untruths (or counter-realities). In a third stage, Baudrillard (1983b) theorizes that the image now “masks the absence of a basic reality” (p. 11). The third stage marks a radical break from the first and second stages, and from representation in general. Representation becomes more or less a ruse or a lure; it can no longer be trusted (it cannot even be trusted to spread lies or falsehoods). In the third stage, the image’s “true” function is neither to reflect nor to distort, but rather to mask the impossibility of representation. Baudrillard (1996) conceptualizes that a crater has been left in the wake of a reality whose referentiality/representability has been “murdered” by the image itself, by the lure of representation, and by the desire to over-signify by way of the image. This third stage is marked by an over or hyperactive global (re)production of images and meanings in a panic mode eager to restore reality/referentiality at all costs. The demands that the real always be meaningful are everywhere in excess. “There is a proliferation of myths of origin and signs of reality; of second-hand truth, objectivity and authenticity. […] there is a panic-stricken production of the real and the referential, above and parallel to the panic of material production,” writes Baudrillard (1983b, pp. 12– 13). A **panic-driven sense of reality’s** radical **absence generates a crisis about the capacity of verifiable truth and representable meaning.** Still, according to this (il)logic, it is not enough to say that the absence of the real creates a void of meaning and truth inside which the entirety of western thought and its belief-systems disappear. Frantically, this void also stimulates and simulates reproductive effects driven by disappointment (that the real is no more) but also by desire (that the quest for the real produce more and more reality). Thus, this stage of “representation” or of reality-production also inevitably turns toward proliferation and saturation of all the signs that can stand for the real itself. The **less reality is present**, **the more** its **signs**, as substitutes for the real, proliferate. As Baudrillard (2005) puts it: “We live in terror both of the excess of meaning and of total meaninglessness” (p. 134). Demands on reality to be exponentially re-enacted, displayed, and proliferated (the new modalities of representation in this third phase) further deepen the absence of the real. Demands for evermore meaning (everything must make sense, be meaningful) exacerbate a general loss of certainty. Meaning, too, is about the exponential production and display of signs, signs that stand for what is meaningful. As Baudrillard (1988) writes, “Everywhere one seeks to produce meaning, to make the world signify, to render it visible. We are not, however, in danger of lacking meaning; quite to the contrary, we are gorged with meaning and it is killing us” (p. 63). Lastly, Baudrillard (1983b) arrives at a fourth stage of the image/simulation. Here, the image, indebted to the effects of absence-proliferation resulting from the third stage, “bears no relation to any reality whatever: it is its own pure simulacrum” (p. 11). This stage of the image relates to a phase of the “real” in which the effects of representation (or what formerly could be called representation) can now be conceptualized as a series of independent operations. Images now circulate and reproduce in more or less complete abstraction from the demands of referentiality. In effect, the “real” has been hollowed out by its own representations (as we saw in the third stage). Nothing is left of the real but its simulacra, its sign-images that circulate and are exchanged indiscriminately throughout a global mediascape. At this stage, when we point to a “real” object in the world, we actually point **to a hyper-mediation** of the object and of its sign-function, often to manifold images, void of originality by virtue of having been hyper-circulated. The mediation of reality has led to the **disappearance of the** real and representation, and we find instead a hallucinatory complex of “hyperreality” whereby things appear and in fact are “more real than the real” (Baudrillard, 1983a, p. 99). Baudrillard’s diagnosis about representation, reality, and their fateful (hyper)- mediation is reflected through many of the operations of contemporary media, particularly those that involve the proliferation and saturation of inputs and outputs in the global circuitry. The immeasurable **volume** of hyper-produced digital contents seems to have overwhelmed the **global circuits of** communication, representation, and meaning/**signification**. The globalized world is faced with an irreducible complexity of interdependent transmissions, exchanges, and always expanding and morphing communication channels occurring between a multitude of networked actors/actants, interests, and media across the shifting realms of speculative finance, statecraft, international intelligence, the management of political processes, journalism, news-reporting/making, publishing, academia, or “scientific” expertise, and everyday consumer practices, on and on, ad nauseam. There occurs a widespread hyper-generation, hyper-distribution, and hyper-signification of causality and connectivity that, in turn, become virtually indistinguishable categories, excreted by digitally mediated social exchange, and often emerging as a series of signs or symptoms of the boundless growth of an implosive global system. As the system grows, all meanings, certainties, and **truth-claims implode**. Within this implosive global system, mediation of the true and the real may remain operative, but only according to a logic of functional contradiction. Indeed, the promise of certainty is continually (re)produced concomitantly with its disappointment or deferral. This is perhaps the fateful or fatal strategic extension of the culture industry’s logic of domination and libidinal exploitation that had once been outlined by Horkheimer and Adorno (2002). As Horkheimer and Adorno put it, [t]he culture industry endlessly cheats its consumers out of what it endlessly promises. The promissory note of pleasure issued by plot and packaging is indefinitely prolonged: the promise, which actually comprises the entire show, disdainfully intimates that there is nothing more to come, that the diner must be satisfied with reading the menu. (p. 111) Today, however, the operationalization of promise-disappointment functions beyond the strategic scope of consumer marketing and the culture industry. The **mediatized subject** is constantly hit by a barrage of direct and indirect promissory notes about various forms and versions of certainty, security, and **truth** emanating from multiple news media pundits, commentators, ideologues, technocrats, politicians, community activists, and fellow “digizens.” Increasingly, the reality of power (social, political, economic, etc.) is being scrambled by a hyper-real overproduction of conflicting “truths” and “untruths,” “reals” and “unreals,” “facts” and “alternative facts,” or “news” and “fake news” that exacerbate the implosion of ideologically incoherent and semantically fragmented images purporting to represent some sort of social/ political/economic reality (Artrip & Debrix, 2014). Put differently, in seeking to diagnose and represent the true and the real, media today often produce a series of “undecidable symptoms, and an assortment of vague and contradictory diagnoses” (Baudrillard, 1995, p. 48). Even mainstream news commentaries today echo a vaguely postmodern concern that we have somehow entered a dangerous “post-truth” era of mediated social and political reality (Davies, 2016; Flood, 2016). One widespread sentiment in response to this “posttruth crisis” is to fetishize “fact-checking” technologies and related epistemic media/ truth policing practices. This sentiment commonly implores that countermeasures be taken in response to “fake news” proliferation. Yet, the machineries that produce and disseminate the true and the untrue are one and the same. Both involve the same conditions of reproduction, the same thirst for reality, and the same system of operationalized promise/disappointment. The imperative to “fact-check” suggests that media need to fight against a threat to their own legitimacy and against the endangerment of truth. But journalists and pundits who tout “fact-checking” as some panacean form of political/social resistance appear to do so in complete ignorance or denial of the hyper-real effects of today’s global media. They fail to see that, in the words of Baudrillard (2005), “[t]he excess of information engenders undecidability of facts and confusion of minds. […] The excess of transparency engenders terror” (p. 193). The ethos/pathos of “factchecking” assumes that the immediacy of truth is still possible, or that media can or must remain neutral conduits for the transmission of reality. Thus, the fetishization of “fact-checking” does not care to address (or cannot make itself address) the more difficult situation, but one that is arguably at the root of the so-called post-truth condition: truth is always already **mediated**. Truth is always already **vulnerable to the challenges of “alternative” forms of reality assessment** and representation. The viral form of today’s media simultaneously demands and prohibits a hegemonic instantiation of truth. Perhaps this simultaneous and contradictory demand for and prohibition of epistemological hegemony has always been a central feature of liberal democracies and their quests for truth. The devout faith in the “marketplace of ideas” in (neo)liberal democratic designs—rooted in the virtues of transparency, freedom, and competition—promises that (like the infamous invisible hand of the market, perhaps) it will eventually always be able to sort out fact from fiction. But the radical equivalency and universal fungibility of all ideas make it such that each attempt to instantiate a hegemonic truth tends only to energize an **oppositional** or contradictory attempt. In the domain of news and political media, the user-subject’s search for truth resembles a shell game, the plight of which is perhaps nowhere more evident than with Counselor to President Trump Kellyanne Conway’s insistence on “alternative facts” in opposition to the seemingly more measured, documented, quantitative, and conventional facts reported about public attendance at Trump’s presidential inauguration (Bradner, 2017). The new U.S. executive’s blatant disregard for referential reality, made evident by the continual torrent of images, signs, and contradictory truth-claims disseminated from the state apparatus (or via the president’s Twitter account), reflects a stage of simulation in which the lie operates as a self-sustaining simulacrum. The lie is no longer a “counterfeit” (as it was in Baudrillard’s second phase of the image), but rather a free-floating signifier. The lie no longer antagonizes truth or the real. Rather, the lie makes sense only in relation to other lies that do not even care anymore to appear truthful. The lie mirrors the hyper-real condition and operations of media because it functions according to a framework of “truth” that assumes no weight about reality, assigns no inherent value to the real, and makes no referential claims. There is no certainty left when it comes to truths and lies. What is left is an unending play of symptoms emanating from the oversaturation (an oversaturation of images, signs, statements, and “realities,” once again) of an undifferentiated global system. Everything becomes uncertain (Baudrillard might say that it is indifferent), reduced to the universally fungible mode of information/news. As Baudrillard (1995) intimated, “everything which is turned into information becomes the object of endless speculation” (p. 41).

#### The Impact is implosive violence as we seek to exterminate otherness by imposing meaning onto the globe.

Artrip and Debrix 14, Ryan E., and François Debrix. "The digital fog of war: Baudrillard and the violence of representation." (2014). (Philosophy and Political Science at Guilford College and Elon University)//Elmer

The story that needs to be told is thus not about the undoubtedly deplorable “truth” or fact of explosive and warlike violence, but about a violence of another sort. In the radical digital **transparency** of the global scene, we (members of the demos) often **have** full or direct exposure to explosivity, as we saw above with the image of terror. But what still needs to be thought and problematized is implosivity or what may be called **implosive violence.** Implosive violence is a violence for which we do not, and perhaps will never, have much of a language (Rancière, 2007: 123). Although, not having a language for it or, rather, as we saw above, seeking to find a language to talk about it and, perhaps, to make sense of it is still sought after. This is, perhaps, what digital pictures of war/terror violence seek to capture or want to force through. Implosive violence, often digitally rendered these days, is in close contact with media technologies and representational devices and techniques because **it seeks** representation and **meaning**. This is why implosive violence insists **on calling in wars** (against terror, for example) and on **mobilizing war machines** (against terrorist others, against **vague enemy figures**), but wars and war machines that no longer have—to the extent that they ever had—a clearly identifiable object and subject, or **a clear mission/purpose**. As such, this implosive violence and its wars (the new Western/global way of war, perhaps) **must remain** uncertain, **unclear**, foggy, inwardly driven, representational, and indeed virulent. They must remain uncertain and confused even as they are digitally operative and desperately capture events/images **to give the impression that meanings/significations can and will be found.** Yet, as we saw above, it is not meanings exactly that must be found, but information and the endless guarantee of its immediate circulation. As information occupies the empty place of meaning, certainty, or truth, images must be instantaneously turned into appearances that search for meanings that will never be discovered because, instead, a proliferation of information-worthy facts and beliefs will take over (perhaps this is what US fake pundit and comedian Stephen Colbert famously referred to as “truthiness”). Or, as Baudrillard puts it, “free from its former enemies, humanity now has to **create enemies from within**, which in fact produces a wide variety of inhuman metastases” (Baudrillard, 2003). Thus, this implosive violence is destined to be a global violence since it "is the product of a system that tracks down any form of negativity and singularity, including of course death as the ultimate form of singularity. […] It is a violence that, in a sense, puts an end to violence itself and strives to establish a world where anything related to the natural must disappear  […] Better than a global violence, we should call it a global virulence. This form of violence is indeed viral. It moves by contagion, produces by chain reaction, and little by little it destroys our immune systems and our capacities to resist" (2003; our italics).

#### The 1AC’s reliance on Media as a conduit of images and facts is an abolishment of reality that replaces human interaction with spectacle, image, and simulation reinforcing the hegemony of the Sign Economy.

Pawlett 7, William. Jean Baudrillard: against banality. Routledge, 2007. (Senior Lecturer in Cultural Studies at the University of Wolverhampton)//Elmer

To exemplify his position regarding information, Baudrillard focuses on news reports where there is ‘a discontinuum of signs and messages in which all orders are equivalent (1998a: 121). News reports on ‘war, famine and death are interspersed with adverts for washing powder and razors’ and, we might add, with the self-advertising of journalists, news organisations and TV companies. But this is not merely a chaotic, confused abundance of signs: ‘it is the imposition upon us, by the systematic succession of messages, of the equivalence of history and the minor news item, of the event and the spectacle, of information and advertising at the level of the sign’ (1998a: 122). Not only events, but also the world itself, are ‘segmented’, cut up into ‘discontinuous, successive, non-contradictory messages’. We do not consume a spectacle or an image as such, but the principle of the succession of all possible spectacles or images: ‘there is no danger of anything emerging that is not one sign among others’ (1998a: 122). Baudrillard engages with the theories of McLuhan and his infamous slogan ‘The medium is the message’, arguing that the really signiﬁcant level at which media inﬂuence people is not that of the content of its messages. It is in ‘the constraining pattern – linked to the very technical essence of those media – of the disarticulation of the real into successive and equivalent signs’ (1998a: 122). Marxist attempts to theorise the effects of the media on audiences and consumers fail because such critiques focus on the ideological nature of content and the ownership of networks but pay little attention to the medium itself and to its possible affects on perception and social relations (1981: 166–72). In exploring the medium Baudrillard postulates a ‘law of technological inertia’, suggesting that the closer the medium gets to ‘the real’, through techniques such as documentary style ﬁlm-making and live coverage, the greater the ‘real absence from the world’. In other words, ‘the world’ as space of perspective – of seeing and knowing – is increasingly replaced by a sequence of images in which ‘the primary function of each message is to refer to another message’ (1998a: 122). In this way the medium, not the message, imposes a certain way of seeing the world on the audience. Rather than a space for reﬂection and critical distance we have information sliced and diced as a commodity-sign. This is no Luddite hatred of technology. Both McLuhan and Baudrillard note that the medium of the printed book, dating back to the ﬁfteenth century, imposes a particular mechanics of perception, a form of constraint favouring solitary reﬂection and linearity. But the distinctive nature of the electronic mass media is, for Baudrillard, that they ‘function to neutralise the lived, unique, eventual character of the world and substitute for it a multiple universe of media which are homogeneous’ (1998a: 123). The electronic media are ideological in the sense that they declare through their form, and often also in content, ‘the omnipotence of a system of reading over a world become a system of signs’. The ‘confused’ and ‘conﬂicted’ world is transformed into an abstract, ordered one, a world of consumable signs where ‘the signiﬁer becomes its own signiﬁed . . . we see the abolition of the signiﬁed and the tautology of the signiﬁer . . . the substitution of the code for the referential dimension deﬁnes mass media consumption’ (1998a: 124–5). For Baudrillard the media are, in fact, ‘anti-mediatory’ (1981: 169). They prevent response, the reciprocal exchange of meaning, allowing only simulatory responses, responses drawn from a predeﬁned range or code. Indeed, for Baudrillard ‘the code is the only agency that speaks’ (1981: 179). Today, ‘interactive’ TV is far more developed but the ‘interactivity’ on offer remains that of the medium or the code. We are confronted with a myriad of choices, channels, spectator angles and phone-in options, but all are generated from the medium: we merely complete the circuit. Human interaction is replaced by simulatory interactivity.

#### The Will to Objectivity turns the world into a Global Target – Academic Rationality and the Will to Know culminates in Extermination.

* Answers Science/Objective Truth Args

Chow 06. Rey Chow, professor of comparative literature at Brown, The Age of the World Target, 2006, pg. 40 //Elmer

Often under the modest and apparently innocuous agendas of fact gathering and documentation, the "scientific" and "objective" production of knowledge during peacetime about the various special "areas" became the institutional practice that substantiated and elaborated the militaristic conception of the world as target.52 In other words, despite the claims about the apolitical and disinterested nature of the pursuits of higher learning, activities undertaken under the rubric of area studies, such as language training, historiography, anthropology, economics, political science, and so forth, are fully inscribed in the politics and ideology of war. To that extent, the disciplining, research, and development of so-called academic information are **part and parcel of a strategic logic**. And yet, if the production of knowledge (with its vocabulary of aims and goals, research, data analysis, experimentation, and verification) in fact shares the same scientific and military premises as war—if, for instance, the ability to translate a difficult language can be regarded as equivalent to the ability to break military codes 53—is it a surprise that it is doomed to fail in its avowed attempts **to "know" the other cultures**? Can "knowledge" that is derived from the same kinds of bases as war put an end to the violence of warfare, or is such knowledge not simply warfare's accomplice, destined to destroy rather than preserve the forms of lives at which it aims its focus? As long as knowledge is produced in this self-referential manner, as a circuit of targeting **or getting the other** that ultimately consolidates the omnipotence and omnipresence of the sovereign "self"/"eye"—the "I"—that is the United States, the other will have no choice but remain just that—a target whose existence justifies only one thing, **its destruction by the bomber**. As long as the focus of our study of Asia remains the United States, and as long as this focus is not accompanied by knowledge of what is happening elsewhere at other times as well as at the present, such study will ultimately confirm once again the self-referential function of virtual worlding that was unleashed by the dropping of the atomic bombs, with the United States always occupying the position of the bomber, and other cultures always viewed as the military and information target fields. In this manner, events whose historicity does not fall into the epistemically closed orbit of the atomic bomber—such as the Chinese reactions to the war from a primarily anti-Japanese point of view that I alluded to at the beginning of this chapter—will never receive the attention that is due to them. "Knowledge," however conscientiously gathered and however large in volume, will lead only to further silence and to the silencing of diverse experiences.54 This is one reason why, as Harootunian remarks, area studies has been, since its inception, haunted by "the absence of a definable object"-and by "the problem of the vanishing object."

#### The aff’s search for metaphysical consistency is just an investment in the simulacra that coheres our reflections on those alleged truths – guarantees philosophical incoherence.

Baudrillard 2 [Jean; Simulacra and Simulation; French Sociologist/Philosopher; 1981; University of Michigan Press; LCA-BP] \*bracketed for lang

Or, very much on the contrary, there is a rigorous and necessary correlation between the two, to the extent that **Information is** directly **destructive** of meaning and signification, or that it neutralizes them. The loss of meaning is directly linked to the dissolving, dissuasive action of information, the media, and the mass media. The third hypothesis is the most interesting but flies in the face of every commonly held opinion. Everywhere **Socialization is measured by** the **exposure** to media messages. **Whoever is underexposed** to the media **is** dissocialized or virtually **asocial**. Everywhere information is thought to produce an accelerated circulation of meaning, a plus value of meaning homologous to the economic one that results from the accelerated rotation of capital Information is thought to create communication, and even if the waste is enormous, a general consensus would have it that nevertheless, as a whole, there is an excess of meaning, which is redistributed in all the interstices of the social—just **as** consensus would have it that **material production**, despite its dysfunctions and irrationalities, opens onto an excess of wealth and social purpose. We are all complicitous in this myth. It is the alpha and omega of our modernity, without which the credibility of our social organization would collapse. Well, the fact is that it is collapsing, and for this very reason: because where We think that information produces meaning, the opposite occurs. Information devours its own content. It devours communication and the social. And for two reasons. 1. Rather than creating communication**, it exhausts itself in the** act of **staging** communication. Rather than producing meaning, it exhausts itself in the staging of **meaning**. A gigantic process of simulation that is very familiar. The nondirective interview, speech, listeners who call in, participation at every level, blackmail through speech: “You are concerned, you are the event, etc.” More and more information is invaded by this kind of phantom content, this homeopathic grafting, this awakening dream of communication. **A circular arrangement through which one stages the desire of the audience**, the antitheater of communication, which as one knows, is never anything but the recycling in the negative of the traditional institution, the integrated circuit of the negative. Immense energies are deployed to hold this simulacrum at bay, to avoid the brutal desimulation that would confront us in the face of the obvious reality of a radical loss of meaning. It is useless to ask if it is the loss of communication that produces this escalation in the simulacrum, or whether it is the simulacrum that is there first for dissuasive ends, to short-circuit in advance any possibility of communication (precession of the model that calls an end to the real). Useless to ask which is the first term, there is none, it is a circular process—that of simulation, that of the hyperreal. The hyperreality of communication and of meaning. More real than the real, that is how the real is abolished. Thus, not only communication but The social functions in a closed circuit, as a lure— to which the force of myth is attached. Belief, faith in information attach themselves to this tautological proof that the system gives of itself by doubling the signs of an unlocatable reality. But one can believe that this belief is as ambiguous as that which was attached to myths in ancient societies. One both believes and doesn’t. One does not ask oneself, “I know very well, but still.” A sort of inverse simulation in the masses, in each one of us, corresponds to this simulation of meaning and of communication in which this system encloses us. To this tautology of the system the masses respond with ambivalence, to deterrence they respond with disaffection, or with an always enigmatic belief. Myth exists, but one must guard against thinking that people believe in it: this is the trap of critical thinking that can only be exercised if it presupposes the naïveté and stupidity of the masses. 2. Behind this exacerbated mise-en-scene of communication, the mass media, the pressure of **information pursues an irresistible destructuration of the social**. Thus information dissolves meaning and dissolves the social, in a sort of nebulous state dedicated not to a surplus of innovation, but, on the contrary, to total entropy. Thus the **media are producers not of socialization, but of** exactly the opposite, of **the implosion of the social in the masses**. And this is only the macroscopic extension of the implosion of meaning at the microscopic level of the sign. This implosion should be analyzed according to McLuhan’s formula; the medium is the message, the consequences of which have yet to be exhausted. That means that **All contents of meaning are absorbed in the only dominant form of the medium**. Only the medium can make an event—whatever the contents, whether they are conformist or subversive. A serious problem for all counter-information, pirate-radios, anti-media, etc. But there is something even more serious, which McLuhan himself did not see. Because beyond this neutralization of all content, one could still expect to manipulate the medium in its form and to transform the real by using the impact of the medium as form. If all the content is wiped out, there is perhaps still a subversive, revolutionary use value of the medium as such. That is—and this is where McLuhan’s formula leads, pushed to its limit—there is not only an implosion of the message in the medium, there is, in the same.

**Thus, the alternative is to embrace radical nihilism. Capitalism engages in unending reproduction; only a drainage of excess solves: drain propped up ideals, drain the death grip of semiocapitalism. A society that maintains capitalist production is contingent upon subjects that are forced to labor under semiocapitalism – so we let the system collapse in on itself.**

**Baudrillard 81** [Jean Baudrillard, sociologist, cultural theorist, and philosopher], Simulacra and Simulation, 1981//pesh-anika

Nihilism no longer wears the dark, Wagnerian, Spenglerian, fuliginous colors of the end of the century. It no longer comes from a Weltanschauung of decadence nor from a metaphysical radicality born of the death of God and of all the consequences that must be taken from this death. Today's nihilism is one of transparency, and it is in some sense more radical, more crucial than in its prior and historical forms, because this transparency, this irresolution is indissolubly that of the system, and that of all the theory that still pretends to analyze it. When God died, there was still Nietzsche to say so - the great nihilist before the Eternal and the cadaver of the Eternal. But before the simulated transparency of all things, before the simulacrum of the materialist or idealist realization of the world in hyperreality (God is not dead, he has become hyper-real), there is no longer a theoretical or critical God to recognize his own. The universe, and all of us, have entered live into simulation, into the malefic, not even malefic, indifferent, sphere of deterrence: in a bizarre fashion, nihilism has been entirely realized no longer through destruction, but through simulation and deterrence. From the active, violent phantasm, from the phantasm of the myth and the stage that it also was, historically, it has passed into the transparent, falsely transparent, operation of things. What then remains of a possible nihilism in theory? What new scene can unfold, where nothing and death could be replayed as a challenge, as a stake? We are in a new, and without a doubt insoluble, position in relation to prior forms of nihilism: Romanticism is its first great manifestation: it, along with the Enlightenment's Revolution, corresponds to the destruction of the order of appearances. Surrealism, dada, the absurd, and political nihilism are the second great manifestation, which corresponds to the destruction of the order of meaning. The first is still an aesthetic form of nihilism (dandyism), the second, a political, historical, and metaphysical form (terrorism). These two forms no longer concern us except in part, or not at all. The nihilism of transparency is no longer either aesthetic or political, no longer borrows from either the extermination of appearances, nor from extinguishing the embers of meaning, nor from the last nuances of an apocalypse. There is no longer an apocalypse (only aleatory terrorism still tries to reflect it, but it is certainly no longer political, and it only has one mode of manifestation left that is at the same time a mode of disappearance: the media - now the media are not a stage where something is played, they are a strip, a track, a perforated map of which we are no longer even spectators: receivers). The apocalypse is finished, today it is the precession of the neutral, of forms of the neutral and of indifference. I will leave it to be considered whether there can be a romanticism, an aesthetic of the neutral therein. I don't think so - all that remains, is the fascination for desertlike and indifferent forms, for the very operation of the system that annihilates us. Now, fascination (in contrast to seduction, which was attached to appearances, and to dialectical reason, which was attached to meaning) is a nihilistic passion par excellence, it is the passion proper to the mode of disappearance. We are fascinated by all forms of disappearance, of our disappearance. Melancholic and fascinated, such is our general situation in an era of involuntary transparency. I am a nihilist. I observe, I accept, I assume the immense process of the destruction of appearances (and of the seduction of appearances) in the service of meaning (representation, history, criticism, etc.) that is the fundamental fact of the nineteenth century. The true revolution of the nineteenth century, of modernity, is the radical destruction of appearances, the disenchantment of the world and its abandonment to the violence of interpretation and of history. I observe, I accept, I assume, I analyze the second revolution, that of the twentieth century, that of postmodernity, which is the immense process of the destruction of meaning, equal to the earlier destruction of appearances. He who strikes with meaning is killed by meaning. The dialectic stage, the critical stage is empty. There is no more stage. There is no therapy of meaning or therapy through meaning: therapy itself is part of the generalized process of indifferentiation. The stage of analysis itself has become uncertain, aleatory: theories float (in fact, nihilism is impossible, because it is still a desperate but determined theory, an imaginary of the end, a weltanschauung of catastrophe).\*1 Analysis is itself perhaps the decisive element of the immense process of the freezing over of meaning. The surplus of meaning that theories bring, their competition at the level of meaning is completely secondary in relation to their coalition in the glacial and four-tiered operation of dissection and transparency. One must be conscious that, no matter how the analysis proceeds, it proceeds toward the freezing over of meaning, it assists in the precession of simulacra and of indifferent forms. The desert grows. Implosion of meaning in the media. Implosion of the social in the masses. Infinite growth of the masses as a function of the acceleration of the system. Energetic impasse. Point of inertia. A destiny of inertia for a saturated world. The phenomena of inertia are accelerating (if one can say that). The arrested forms proliferate, and growth is immobilized in excrescence. Such is also the secret of the hypertelie, of what goes further than its own end. It would be our own mode of destroying finalities: going further, too far in the same direction - destruction of meaning through simulation, hypersimulation, hypertelie. Denying its own end through hyperfinality (the crustacean, the statues of Easter Island) - is this not also the obscene secret of cancer? Revenge of excrescence on growth, revenge of speed on inertia. The masses themselves are caught up in a gigantic process of inertia through acceleration. They are this excrescent, devouring, process that annihilates all growth and all surplus meaning. They are this circuit short-circuited by a monstrous finality. It is this point of inertia and what happens outside this point of inertia that today is fascinating, enthralling (gone, therefore, the discreet charm of the dialectic). If it is nihilistic to privilege this point of inertia and the analysis of this irreversibility of systems up to the point of no return, then I am a nihilist. If it is nihilistic to be obsessed by the mode of disappearance, and no longer by the mode of production, then I am a nihilist. Disappearance, aphanisis, implosion, Fury of Verschwindens. Transpolitics is the elective sphere of the mode of disappearance (of the real, of meaning, of the stage, of history, of the social, of the individual). To tell the truth, it is no longer so much a question of nihilism: in disappearance, in the desertlike, aleatory, and indifferent form, there is no longer even pathos, the pathetic of nihilism - that mythical energy that is still the force of nihilism, of radicality, mythic denial, dramatic anticipation. It is no longer even disenchantment, with the seductive and nostalgic, itself enchanted, tonality of disenchantment. It is simply disappearance. The trace of this radicality of the mode of disappearance is already found in Adorno and Benjamin, parallel to a nostalgic exercise of the dialectic. Because there is a nostalgia of the dialectic, and without a doubt the most subtle dialectic is nostalgic to begin with. But more deeply, there is in Benjamin and Adorno another tonality, that of a melancholy attached to the system itself, one that is incurable and beyond any dialectic. It is this melancholia of systems that today takes the upper hand through the ironically transparent forms that surround us. It is this melancholia that is becoming our fundamental passion. It is no longer the spleen or the vague yearnings of the fin-de-siecle soul. It is no longer nihilism either, which in some sense aims at normalizing everything through destruction, the passion of resentment (ressentiment).\*2 No, melancholia is the fundamental tonality of functional systems, of current systems of simulation, of programming and information. Melancholia is the inherent quality of the mode of the disappearance of meaning, of the mode of the volatilization of meaning in operational systems. And we are all melancholic. Melancholia is the brutal disaffection that characterizes our saturated systems. Once the hope of balancing good and evil, true and false, indeed of confronting some values of the same order, once the more general hope of a relation of forces and a stake has vanished. Everywhere, always, the system is too strong: hegemonic. Against this hegemony of the system, one can exalt the ruses of desire, practice revolutionary micrology of the quotidian, exalt the molecular drift or even defend cooking. This does not resolve the imperious necessity of checking the system in broad daylight. This, only terrorism can do. It is the trait of reversion that effaces the remainder, just as a single ironic smile effaces a whole discourse, just as a single flash of denial in a slave effaces all the power and pleasure of the master. The more hegemonic the system, the more the imagination is struck by the smallest of its reversals. The challenge, even infinitesimal, is the image of a chain failure. Only this reversibility without a counterpart is an event today, on the nihilistic and disaffected stage of the political. Only it mobilizes the imaginary. If being a nihilist, is carrying, to the unbearable limit of hegemonic systems, this radical trait of derision and of violence, this challenge that the system is summoned to answer through its own death, then I am a terrorist and nihilist in theory as the others are with their weapons. Theoretical violence, not truth, is the only resource left us. But such a sentiment is Utopian. Because it would be beautiful to be a nihilist, if there were still a radicality - as it would be nice to be a terrorist, if death, including that of the terrorist, still had meaning. But it is at this point that things become insoluble. Because to this active nihilism of radicality, the system opposes its own, the nihilism of neutralization. The system is itself also nihilistic, in the sense that it has the power to pour everything, including what denies it, into indifference. In this system, death itself shines by virtue of its absence. (The Bologna train station, the Oktoberfest in Munich: the dead are annulled by indifference, that is where terrorism is the involuntary accomplice of the whole system, not politically, but in the accelerated form of indifference that it contributes to imposing.)

#### The world fundamentally rests on the logic of (in)difference, in which origins are simultaneously unlocatable and everywhere all at once. The proliferation of communication under late stage capitalism washes up and crashes on the rocks of truth and falsity, eroding meaning at its shores. Thus, te role of the ballot is to vote for the debater who best ruptures hyperreality.

**Baudrillard 1** [Jean Baudrillard, sociologist, philosopher and cultural theorist, true sweetheart, “Fatal Strategies”; LCA-BP] \*edited for lang

More generally, visible things do not terminate in obscurity and in silence; they vanish into what is more visible than the visible: obscenity. An example of this ex-centricity of things, of this drift into excrescence, is the irruption of randomness, indeterminacy, and relativity within our system. The reaction to this new state of things has not been a resigned abandonment of traditional values, but rather a ~~crazy~~ overdetermination, an exacerbation, of these values of reference, function, finality, and causality. Perhaps nature is, in fact, horrified by the void, for it is in the void, and in order to avoid it, that plethoric, hypertrophic, and saturated systems emerge. Some-thing redundant always settles in the place where there is no longer any-thing. Determinacy does not withdraw to the benefit of indeterminacy, but to the benefit of a hyperdeterminacy: the redundancy of determinacy in a void. Finality does not disappear in favor of the aleatory, but rather in favor of hyperfinality, of a hyperfunctionality: more functional than the functional, more final than the final - the hypertelic (hypertélie). Having been plunged into an in-ordinate uncertainty by randomness, we have responded by an excess of causality and teleology. Hypertelic growth is not an accident in the evolution of certain species, it is the challenge of telos as a response to increasing indeterminacy. In a system where things are increasingly left to chance, telos turns into delirium, and develops entities that know all too well how to exceed their own ends, to the point of invading the entire system. This is true of the behavior of the cancerous cell (hypervitality in a single direction), of the hyperspecialization of objects and people, of the operationalism of the smallest detail, and of the hypersignification of the slightest sign: the leitmotiv of our daily lives. But this is also the chancroid secret of every obese and cancerous system: **those of communication, of information**, of production, of destruction - **each having long since exceeded the limits of functionality,** and use value, in order to enter the phantasmic escalation of finalities. The ~~hysteria~~ of causality, the inverse of the ~~hysteria~~ of finalities, which corresponds to the simultaneous effacement of origins and causes, is **the obsessive search for origins, for responsibility, for reference**; an attempt to extinguish phenomena in infinitesimal causes. But it is also the genesis and genetics complex, which on various accounts are represented by psychoanalytic palingenesis (the whole psyche hypostatized in prime infancy, every sign a symptom); and biogenetics (all probabilities saturated by the fatal ordering of molecules); and the hypertrophying of historical research, the delirium of explaining everything, of ascribing everything, of referencing everything ... All this becomes a fantastic burden - references living one off the other and at the other's expense. Here again we have an excrescent interpretive system developing without any relation to its objective. All of this is a consequence of a forward flight in the face of the haemorrhaging of objective causes. Inertial phenomena are accelerating. Arrested forms proliferate, and growth is immobilized in excrescence. This is the form of the hypertelic, that which goes beyond its own ends: the crustacean that strays far from the ocean unable to return (to what secret end?); or the increasing gigantism of Easter Island statues. Tentacular, protuberant, excrescent, hypertelic: this is the inertial destiny of a saturated world. The denial of its own end in hyperfinality; is this not also the mechanism of cancer? The revenge of growth in excrescence. The revenge and summons of speed in inertia. The masses are also caught in this gigantic process of inertia by acceleration. The masses are this excrescent process, which precipitates all growth towards ruin. **It is the circuit that is shortcircuited by a monstrous finality**. Exxon: the American government requests a complete report on the multinational's activities throughout the world. The result is twelve 1,000 page volumes, whose reading alone, not to mention the analysis, would exceed a few years work. Where is the information? Should we initiate an information dietetics? Should we thin out the obese, the obese systems, and create institutions to uninform? The incredible destructive stockpiling of strategic weapons is only equaled by the worldwide demographic overgrowth. As paradoxical as it may seem, both are of the same nature and correspond to the same logic of excrescence and inertia. A triumphant anomaly: no principle of justice or of proportion can temper either one; they incite one another. And worse, there isn't even so much as Promethean defiance here, no excessive passion or pride. It appears simply that the species has crossed a particular mysterious point, where it has become impossible to turn back, to decelerate, or to slow down.

### 2

#### Desire for “Objectivity” and its impartiality results in a false balance in the name of media neutrality that results in the denial of the existence of 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 (left-leaning, right-leaning, regional, online) in five countries (Germany, India, 47 Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States), and is complemented by a survey of the authors of 48 these articles. We argue that a common explanation for the presence of climate change denial in 49 media coverage – adherence to the journalistic norm of balance (Boykoff and Boykoff, 2004) – can no 50 longer be regarded as the most powerful driver of climate coverage. Instead we find a transnational 51 pattern of interpretive journalism that puts the denial of anthropogenic climate change into context. 52 2. Analytical framework and state of research: journalists’ role in the climate debate 53 To assess how journalists report on climate change and how they deal with its denial, it is 54 first necessary to describe what we call the climate change frame or IPCC view, as well as the 55 contrarian voices in public debates. The climate change frame or consensus as presented in IPCC 56 reports and in scientific journals may be summarized in four statements (Brüggemann and Engesser, 57 2014; Shehata and Hopmann, 2012): (1) Global warming represents an extraordinary rise in average 58 global temperatures since the industrial revolution. (2) It is mainly caused by human-induced 59 emissions of CO2 and other greenhouse gases. (3) It creates problems for both ecosystems and 60 humanity. (4) Emissions need to be reduced to avoid future damage. These statements allow us to 61 identify four types of contrarianism or challenges to the climate change frame; they focus on 62 doubting: the trend (climate change), the attribution (anthropogenic), the impact (risks, severe 63 problems), and the treatment (reducing emissions) (see Rahmstorf (2004) for the first three types of 64 contrarianism). This framework does not capture all variants of contrarian claims (Capstick and 65 Pidgeon, 2014); it focuses on the challenges that attack the core of the consensus among the world’s 66 leading climate scientists.67 We call actors who challenge the climate change frame in public debates ‘contrarians’ rather 68 than ‘skeptics’ or ‘deniers,’ following a suggestion by McCright (2007) and O’Neill and Boykoff (2010). 69 There are few climate scientists among the contrarians; the group is comprised of people from 70 different backgrounds, many of whom are closely connected to professional lobbyists and the ‘denial 71 machine’ (Dunlap and McCright, 2011) – i.e., their professional activities are part of a strategy to 72 prevent pro-active climate policy-making (Boussalis and Coan, 2016). Contrarians as visible speakers 73 in public debates need to be distinguished from both individual citizens who may have doubts about 74 climate change and from actors who challenge more specific claims in the climate debate that are 75 not part of the basic consensus outlined above. 76 The journalistic practices of (1) giving disproportionate voice to contrarians and (2) 77 challenging the climate change consensus will be the focus of our study. The two practices are 78 interrelated but do not necessarily go together as the empirical analysis will show. First, we will 79 briefly sketch a conceptual framework of important factors that shape media content. Three levels of 80 influence can be distinguished: individual (journalist), organizational (newsroom), and external (e.g. 81 social institutions and culture) (cf. Shoemaker and Reese, 2014). In different contexts, the 82 ‘discretionary power’ (Semetko et al., 1991) of individual journalists varies: They are provided with 83 more or less leverage to set the frames of their coverage (Brüggemann, 2014). On all three levels of 84 influence, two main forces leave their imprint on media coverage: ideological biases and structural 85 media logics (Schulz, 2011: 68). Biases are preferences or inclinations to treat a topic in a certain way 86 (Lee and Grimmer, 2008) that stem from individual journalists, editors, external actors, and the wider 87 cultural context. ‘Media logic(s)’ include the professional norms and routines of journalists and 88 newsrooms, which Altheide (2004, p. 294) defines as “assumptions and processes for constructing 89 messages within a particular medium.” The most powerful media logics are news factors such as 90 novelty, elite actors, or proximity: editors look for these attributes when deciding which stories to 91 run, and journalists emphasize them in their coverage (Galtung and Ruge, 1965). 92 Past studies have found evidence that the power of bias and media logics at different levels 93 of influence explains the role of contrarians in climate coverage. Depending on ideological bias, 94 climate change is depicted as more or less uncertain, and climate policy is described as more or less 95 costly, depending on the policies of the respective national government (Grundmann, 2007). Below 96 the national level that introduces this kind of political/cultural bias, newsroom policies affect climate 97 coverage; right-leaning media are more likely to cite contrarian views (Carvalho, 2007; Feldman et 98 al., 2015; Feldman et al., 2011). 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)). Overall, these findings show that there is no linear 172 decline in contrarianism in the news, but rather that specific events (or staged pseudo events like 173 Climategate) provide ‘media opportunity structures’ (Adam et al., 2003) for contrarians to become 174 salient voices in media coverage. This explains why Shehata and Hopmann (2012), who focused on 175 media coverage between 1997 and 2007, did not find contrarians in the news. They studied UN 176 climate conferences, where contrarians have not managed to play a significant political role. This was 177 radically different in the context of the Climategate campaign: the content analysis of Painter and 178 Ashe (2012) found that contrarian views occurred in every third article in the United States, followed 179 by the United Kingdom, while contrarians played only a negligible role in all other countries. 180 Painter and Ashe also found that roughly the same number of articles raised doubts about 181 climate change in right-leaning and left-leaning papers. The only difference was that right-leaning 182 papers hosted contrarianism in their commentary pages, while these sources were quoted in the left183 leaning newspapers. This confirms the influence of editorial bias on climate coverage: in right-leaning 184 papers, it is part of the editorial opinion; in left-leaning papers, contrarianism is raised by external 185 voices. Thus, past research has identified the salience of contrarianism and the evaluation of 186 contrarians as an important case for studying the influence of both ideological biases (along the left187 right spectrum) and journalistic norms (e.g., balance, news values). While the studies mentioned 188 above have pushed the research in this area ahead, there are three main gaps in the literature. 189 The first concerns the role of contrarianism in post-Climategate coverage, after 2010. 190 Climategate was an extraordinary moment of success of political spin, but it remains to be seen 191 whether climate change denial retained a voice in transnational journalism afterwards. Grundmann 192 and Stock (2014) extended their analysis to 2010 and show that after the peak of attention to 193 contrarians, the levels declined, but remained somewhat higher than during earlier times. In Britain, 194 the level of contrarianism in media coverage remained high in 2011 (Painter and Gavin, 2016). 195 Second, Painter and Ashe’s finding that contrarians were equally prominent in right- and left196 leaning papers raises the question whether (and how) these quotes were evaluated in the coverage. 197 For example, it is not clear whether contrarians were mentioned in the context of how they continue 198 to make unsubstantiated claims with no backing in climate science, whether they were balanced with 199 other voices (as originally posited in the Boykoff and Boykoff study from 2004), or whether 200 unbalanced contrarianism is occurring (as Painter and Gavin (2016) show for parts of the right201 leaning press in Britain). In this regard, the study by Grundmann and Stock (2012) provides a first 202 hint, as the term Climategate in their co-location analysis linked with the terms ‘stolen’ and ‘hacked’ 203 in the US media, while the British media preferred ‘leaked,’ which indicates that journalists in 204 different countries framed Climategate quite differently. This shows that analysis of the frequency of 205 reporting contrarian viewpoints needs to also include whether and how they were evaluated in the 206 articles. 207 Third, it is unclear whether the quoting of contrarians is motivated by media logic through 208 adherence to journalistic norms (such as balance or news values) or by ideological biases (such as 209 genuine questioning of the validity of climate science). This can best be explored by connecting 210 content analysis data with survey data (following the model introduced in Dearing (1995)).

#### Advocacy Journalism is key to Solve Climate Change:

#### 1] Motivates organization to reduce emissions at the local level

Petersen et al. 19 [Alexander Michael Petersen, Associate Professor at UC Merced, Emmanuel M. Vincent, Research Scientist with a PhD at the University Pierre et Marie Curie and a post-doctoral fellowship at MIT, and Anthony LeRoy Westerling, professor at UC Merced with a PhD from UC San Diego, 2019, “Discrepancy in scientific authority and media visibility of climate change scientists and contrarians,” Nature Communications, https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-019-09959-4]/Kankee

We juxtapose 386 prominent contrarians with 386 expert scientists by tracking their digital footprints across ∼200,000 research publications and ∼100,000 English-language digital and print media articles on climate change. Projecting these individuals across the same backdrop facilitates quantifying disparities in media visibility and scientific authority, and identifying organization patterns within their association networks. Here we show via direct comparison that contrarians are featured in 49% more media articles than scientists. Yet when comparing visibility in mainstream media sources only, we observe just a 1% excess visibility, which objectively demonstrates the crowding out of professional mainstream sources by the proliferation of new media sources, many of which contribute to the production and consumption of climate change disinformation at scale. These results demonstrate why climate scientists should increasingly exert their authority in scientific and public discourse, and why professional journalists and editors should adjust the disproportionate attention given to contrarians. Introduction Since the early 2000s there has been little disagreement among scientific experts over the fundamental evidence supporting the existence, origin, and societal significance of anthropogenic climate change (CC)1,2,3,4. Yet, while an anthropogenic cause is supported by an overwhelming majority of climate change scientists (CCS)5, climate change contrarians (CCC) have successfully organized a strong voice within politics and science communication in the United States6,7. Historians of science have detailed the political origins of the CCC movement, documenting how its strategic efforts succeeded in distorting the science-based narrative on multiple fronts, e.g., by promoting the idea that there is a lack of scientific consensus concerning anthropogenic CC6,8,9,10,11,12, despite the fact that objective research has found little evidence for such a claim. One study comparing consensus scientists with unconvinced scientists found that the 2–3% of researchers unconvinced by evidence for anthropogenic CC were not only small in group size but also had substantially lower levels of authority in the CC literature10. Another study surveying ∼3000 earth scientists found the highest levels of CC consensus to be among the most expert climatologists5. Public confusion over science affects various other domains13, in addition to CC communication14, and requires a better understanding of the human, social, and technological factors that facilitate widespread disinformation efforts15,16,17,18. One salient human factor that contributes to the public’s susceptibility to information manipulation is cognitive bias. A particularly relevant example is motivated reasoning—the tendency for individuals to bias their judgements according to personal- and group-level values, even when faced with documented facts19,20,21. Another class of factors are prominent external influences, owing to elite political cues22, ideological biases23,24, cultural worldviews25, and even personal weather experiences26,27. Not least among these external factors is the news media15, which has a longstanding and dominant role empowering cultural politics28. A third decisive technological factor is the paradigm of new media and the nearly boundless scalability of content distribution across the internet. Even in the case where individuals have complete control in choosing their sources of information, they are nevertheless susceptible to significant disparities in content production in addition to being susceptible to media coverage that is disproportionate to the authority and number of scientists holding the consensus viewpoint. Recent research highlights the ramifications of this problem, finding that the acceptance of CC increases (respectively decreases) with consumption of media content that acknowledges (respectively dismisses) CC realities, other factors being equal24. Susceptibility to information manipulation may continue to be a serious problem until society fully adapts to managing the sheer range and volume of new media sources. As such, addressing the opportunities and threats facing CC communication requires an integrated understanding of these human, social, and technological factors. Accordingly, the literature on CC communication is multi-disciplinary. Research efforts draw on a wide range of methods that typically target a single entry point—such as applying content and meta-analysis methods to select collections of scientific publications2,3,10,29, news media articles7,8,9,12,28,30,31,32,33,34, or surveys4,22,23 or by developing behavioral experiments and survey instruments5,11,19,24,25,35. For example, applying in-depth content analysis to select media article sets, researchers identified common factors among skeptical critics, estimated the percentage of CC articles that contain skeptical elements, and developed a typology of CC skeptics30. Building on this framework, another recent study reports that contrarians have strategically shifted away from their external narrative—initially based upon challenging fundamental tenets of CC science (e.g., its anthropogenic origins), thereby positioning themselves as skeptics with legitimate scientific motives for dissent—to instead challenging assessments of CC impacts in an effort to impede the development of proactive regulations33. However, a separate large-scale analysis of internal documents from 19 contrarian organizations shows that the inward contrarian narrative is still rather focused on CC science, with the relative frequency of science-related topics increasing relative to policy-related topics over the period 2009–201334. We complement these extensive efforts by investigating the degree to which socio-technical factors facilitate the visibility and emergence of authority among contrarian claims-makers36. To address this literature gap, we focus our analysis on a group of 386 prominent contrarians, denoted both individually and collectively by CCC. We compare these CCC with 386 prominent scientists active in CC research, denoted hereafter by CCS. These experts in CC science serve as an objective measurement baseline for juxtaposing visibility in the media with authority in the scientific domain. To operationalize this integrative comparison, we collected two large datasets through 2016, comprised of ∼200,000 CC research articles from the Web of Science (WOS) and ∼100,000 English-language CC media articles from the Media Cloud (MC) project37. By focusing on a fixed set of individuals, we leverage large-scale data-driven methods of computational social science38 in an effort to reveal individual-, pair-wise-, and group-level phenomena at the intersection of science and the media. In what follows, we characterize and compare these CC actors at various levels of aggregation: first, by comparing their scientific authority and media visibility at both the individual and group levels; and second, by mapping their associations that are manifest in media co-visibility networks and scientific co-citation networks. Our approach accounts for the variation in visibility across a wide range of sources, from main-stream to non-mainstream sources. By simultaneously accounting for each individual’s scientific authority, our quantitative analysis contributes to the CC communication literature by revealing the degree to which prominent contrarian voices benefit from the scalability of new media, in particular the large number of second-tier news sources and blogs that do not implement rigorous information quality assessment standards. Such disproportionate media visibility of contrarian arguments and actors not only misrepresents the distribution of expert-based beliefs28,36,39, it also manifestly undermines the credible authority of career CCS experts and reinforces the trend of CCC presiding over public scientific discourse40, which all together hinders prospects for rapid public action on CC41. Results

#### 2] Pressures policy makers to pass active legislation to combat warming

Lueddeke 19. Jack Lueddeke. September 16, 2019. Advocacy Journalism & Why the World Needs It. <https://envhumanities.sites.gettysburg.edu/environmental-journalism/week-4/advocacy-journalism-why-the-world-needs-it/?fbclid=IwAR39i1ZxUhnGAGn5gcdZ1pjuI8V5q8P7zbw8RYX1FAkRu671kmA7DpqZE38>

Should journalists write about what they personally believe in or simply report the facts? The answer to that question differs depending on the type of journalism. A journalist reporting on economics should state the facts so people can make informed decisions. A journalist working the green beat should include personal feelings to advocate for the planet. Advocacy journalism is a type of journalism that has an intent, or objective. The writer wants their readers to support what they’re reading about. In today’s world of a failing environment any and everyone should be concerned with the going ons of the world. Because a reporter writes about an environmental issue and urges readers to take action does not mean that it isn’t good journalism. Environmental journalism is reporting on environmental problems that need to be solved for the sake of life on Earth. Marianne Lavelle’s story How Big Oil Blocked the Nation’s Greenest Governor on Climate Change is an example of how advocacy journalism is still good journalism. She writes about how Washington State governor Jay Inslee was trying to pass environmental legislation that would cut carbon emissions and his interaction with BP Oil. She is fair in her reporting, going as far as linking the actual emails between the governor’s office and BP in her story. Going through the SIFT acronym it is clear to see that Lavelle’s story, while being advocacy journalism, is not “fake news.” In reading Covering the Environment: How Journalists Work the Green Beat, Bob Wyss discusses advocacy journalism and what it is. Wyss writes that “sound practice demands a clear distinction between news reports and opinions,” he does not say that advocacy is a bad thing for journalism (Wyss 2018, 213). One of the people he uses as an example is Michael Frome, who for years as “urged journalists to be environmental advocates.” (Wyss 2018, 216) Frome believes in advocacy journalism in behalf of the environment and adhering to the basic tenets of good journalism, he also draws a distinction between bias and advocacy, and concludes that bias “is inescapable.” (Wyss 2018, 216) In fact, the Oxford Research Encyclopedias, say that “Promoters of advocacy also argue that having a situated viewpoint is more transparent,” which would almost eliminate any concerns of bias by outright telling the readers that there is a purpose behind the story. There is no reason to believe that advocacy journalism is bad journalism, especially in environmental journalism. When humans have increased the rate of climate change so drastically and there is a need to slow that change, advocating for the environment is crucial. Lavelle advocates for the support of climate change policies through good journalism so people will stand up and join the fight to save the Earth.

#### Warming causes Extinction

Kareiva 18, Peter, and Valerie Carranza. "Existential risk due to ecosystem collapse: Nature strikes back." Futures 102 (2018): 39-50. (Ph.D. in ecology and applied mathematics from Cornell University, director of the Institute of the Environment and Sustainability at UCLA, Pritzker Distinguished Professor in Environment & Sustainability at UCLA)//Re-cut by Elmer

In summary, six of the nine proposed planetary boundaries (phosphorous, nitrogen, biodiversity, land use, atmospheric aerosol loading, and chemical pollution) are unlikely to be associated with existential risks. They all correspond to a degraded environment, but in our assessment do not represent existential risks. However, the three remaining boundaries (**climate change**, global **freshwater** cycle, **and** ocean **acidification**) do **pose existential risks**. This is **because of** intrinsic **positive feedback loops**, substantial lag times between system change and experiencing the consequences of that change, and the fact these different boundaries interact with one another in ways that yield surprises. In addition, climate, freshwater, and ocean acidification are all **directly connected to** the provision of **food and water**, and **shortages** of food and water can **create conflict** and social unrest. Climate change has a long history of disrupting civilizations and sometimes precipitating the collapse of cultures or mass emigrations (McMichael, 2017). For example, the 12th century drought in the North American Southwest is held responsible for the collapse of the Anasazi pueblo culture. More recently, the infamous potato famine of 1846–1849 and the large migration of Irish to the U.S. can be traced to a combination of factors, one of which was climate. Specifically, 1846 was an unusually warm and moist year in Ireland, providing the climatic conditions favorable to the fungus that caused the potato blight. As is so often the case, poor government had a role as well—as the British government forbade the import of grains from outside Britain (imports that could have helped to redress the ravaged potato yields). Climate change intersects with freshwater resources because it is expected to exacerbate drought and water scarcity, as well as flooding. Climate change can even impair water quality because it is associated with heavy rains that overwhelm sewage treatment facilities, or because it results in higher concentrations of pollutants in groundwater as a result of enhanced evaporation and reduced groundwater recharge. **Ample clean water** is not a luxury—it **is essential for human survival**. Consequently, cities, regions and nations that lack clean freshwater are vulnerable to social disruption and disease. Finally, ocean acidification is linked to climate change because it is driven by CO2 emissions just as global warming is. With close to 20% of the world’s protein coming from oceans (FAO, 2016), the potential for severe impacts due to acidification is obvious. Less obvious, but perhaps more insidious, is the interaction between climate change and the loss of oyster and coral reefs due to acidification. Acidification is known to interfere with oyster reef building and coral reefs. Climate change also increases storm frequency and severity. Coral reefs and oyster reefs provide protection from storm surge because they reduce wave energy (Spalding et al., 2014). If these reefs are lost due to acidification at the same time as storms become more severe and sea level rises, coastal communities will be exposed to unprecedented storm surge—and may be ravaged by recurrent storms. A key feature of the risk associated with climate change is that mean annual temperature and mean annual rainfall are not the variables of interest. Rather it is extreme episodic events that place nations and entire regions of the world at risk. These extreme events are by definition “rare” (once every hundred years), and changes in their likelihood are challenging to detect because of their rarity, but are exactly the manifestations of climate change that we must get better at anticipating (Diffenbaugh et al., 2017). Society will have a hard time responding to shorter intervals between rare extreme events because in the lifespan of an individual human, a person might experience as few as two or three extreme events. How likely is it that you would notice a change in the interval between events that are separated by decades, especially given that the interval is not regular but varies stochastically? A concrete example of this dilemma can be found in the past and expected future changes in storm-related flooding of New York City. The highly disruptive flooding of New York City associated with Hurricane Sandy represented a flood height that occurred once every 500 years in the 18th century, and that occurs now once every 25 years, but is expected to occur once every 5 years by 2050 (Garner et al., 2017). This change in frequency of extreme floods has profound implications for the measures New York City should take to protect its infrastructure and its population, yet because of the stochastic nature of such events, this shift in flood frequency is an elevated risk that will go unnoticed by most people. 4. The combination of positive feedback loops and societal inertia is fertile ground for global environmental catastrophes **Humans** are remarkably ingenious, and **have adapted** to crises **throughout** their **history**. Our doom has been repeatedly predicted, only to be averted by innovation (Ridley, 2011). **However**, the many **stories** **of** human ingenuity **successfully** **addressing** **existential risks** such as global famine or extreme air pollution **represent** environmental c**hallenges that are** largely **linear**, have immediate consequences, **and operate without positive feedbacks**. For example, the fact that food is in short supply does not increase the rate at which humans consume food—thereby increasing the shortage. Similarly, massive air pollution episodes such as the London fog of 1952 that killed 12,000 people did not make future air pollution events more likely. In fact it was just the opposite—the London fog sent such a clear message that Britain quickly enacted pollution control measures (Stradling, 2016). Food shortages, air pollution, water pollution, etc. send immediate signals to society of harm, which then trigger a negative feedback of society seeking to reduce the harm. In contrast, today’s great environmental crisis of climate change may cause some harm but there are generally long time delays between rising CO2 concentrations and damage to humans. The consequence of these delays are an absence of urgency; thus although 70% of Americans believe global warming is happening, only 40% think it will harm them (http://climatecommunication.yale.edu/visualizations-data/ycom-us-2016/). Secondly, unlike past environmental challenges, **the Earth’s climate system is rife with positive feedback loops**. In particular, as CO2 increases and the climate warms, that **very warming can cause more CO2 release** which further increases global warming, and then more CO2, and so on. Table 2 summarizes the best documented positive feedback loops for the Earth’s climate system. These feedbacks can be neatly categorized into carbon cycle, biogeochemical, biogeophysical, cloud, ice-albedo, and water vapor feedbacks. As important as it is to understand these feedbacks individually, it is even more essential to study the interactive nature of these feedbacks. Modeling studies show that when interactions among feedback loops are included, uncertainty increases dramatically and there is a heightened potential for perturbations to be magnified (e.g., Cox, Betts, Jones, Spall, & Totterdell, 2000; Hajima, Tachiiri, Ito, & Kawamiya, 2014; Knutti & Rugenstein, 2015; Rosenfeld, Sherwood, Wood, & Donner, 2014). This produces a wide range of future scenarios. Positive feedbacks in the carbon cycle involves the enhancement of future carbon contributions to the atmosphere due to some initial increase in atmospheric CO2. This happens because as CO2 accumulates, it reduces the efficiency in which oceans and terrestrial ecosystems sequester carbon, which in return feeds back to exacerbate climate change (Friedlingstein et al., 2001). Warming can also increase the rate at which organic matter decays and carbon is released into the atmosphere, thereby causing more warming (Melillo et al., 2017). Increases in food shortages and lack of water is also of major concern when biogeophysical feedback mechanisms perpetuate drought conditions. The underlying mechanism here is that losses in vegetation increases the surface albedo, which suppresses rainfall, and thus enhances future vegetation loss and more suppression of rainfall—thereby initiating or prolonging a drought (Chamey, Stone, & Quirk, 1975). To top it off, overgrazing depletes the soil, leading to augmented vegetation loss (Anderies, Janssen, & Walker, 2002). Climate change often also increases the risk of forest fires, as a result of higher temperatures and persistent drought conditions. The expectation is that **forest fires will become more frequent** and severe with climate warming and drought (Scholze, Knorr, Arnell, & Prentice, 2006), a trend for which we have already seen evidence (Allen et al., 2010). Tragically, the increased severity and risk of Southern California wildfires recently predicted by climate scientists (Jin et al., 2015), was realized in December 2017, with the largest fire in the history of California (the “Thomas fire” that burned 282,000 acres, https://www.vox.com/2017/12/27/16822180/thomas-fire-california-largest-wildfire). This **catastrophic fire** embodies the sorts of positive feedbacks and interacting factors that **could catch humanity off-guard and produce a** true **apocalyptic event.** Record-breaking rains produced an extraordinary flush of new vegetation, that then dried out as record heat waves and dry conditions took hold, coupled with stronger than normal winds, and ignition. Of course the record-fire released CO2 into the atmosphere, thereby contributing to future warming. Out of all types of feedbacks, water vapor and the ice-albedo feedbacks are the most clearly understood mechanisms. Losses in reflective snow and ice cover drive up surface temperatures, leading to even more melting of snow and ice cover—this is known as the ice-albedo feedback (Curry, Schramm, & Ebert, 1995). As snow and ice continue to melt at a more rapid pace, millions of people may be displaced by flooding risks as a consequence of sea level rise near coastal communities (Biermann & Boas, 2010; Myers, 2002; Nicholls et al., 2011). The water vapor feedback operates when warmer atmospheric conditions strengthen the saturation vapor pressure, which creates a warming effect given water vapor’s strong greenhouse gas properties (Manabe & Wetherald, 1967). Global warming tends to increase cloud formation because warmer temperatures lead to more evaporation of water into the atmosphere, and warmer temperature also allows the atmosphere to hold more water. The key question is whether this increase in clouds associated with global warming will result in a positive feedback loop (more warming) or a negative feedback loop (less warming). For decades, scientists have sought to answer this question and understand the net role clouds play in future climate projections (Schneider et al., 2017). Clouds are complex because they both have a cooling (reflecting incoming solar radiation) and warming (absorbing incoming solar radiation) effect (Lashof, DeAngelo, Saleska, & Harte, 1997). The type of cloud, altitude, and optical properties combine to determine how these countervailing effects balance out. Although still under debate, it appears that in most circumstances the cloud feedback is likely positive (Boucher et al., 2013). For example, models and observations show that increasing greenhouse gas concentrations reduces the low-level cloud fraction in the Northeast Pacific at decadal time scales. This then has a positive feedback effect and enhances climate warming since less solar radiation is reflected by the atmosphere (Clement, Burgman, & Norris, 2009). The key lesson from the long list of potentially positive feedbacks and their interactions is that **runaway climate change,** and runaway perturbations have to be taken as a serious possibility. Table 2 is just a snapshot of the type of feedbacks that have been identified (see Supplementary material for a more thorough explanation of positive feedback loops). However, this list is not exhaustive and the possibility of undiscovered positive feedbacks **portends** even greater **existential risks**. The many environmental crises humankind has previously averted (famine, ozone depletion, London fog, water pollution, etc.) were averted because of political will based on solid scientific understanding. We cannot count on complete scientific understanding when it comes to positive feedback loops and climate change.