# TFA 22 R2 – 1NC v Clements SG

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#### The capitalist regime uses the media to placate citizens as a method of state control

McNair 09 (Brian McNair is Professor of Journalism and Communication at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow. He is the author of many books and essays on the relationship between journalism and politics, including Journalism and Democracy (Routledge, 2000), An Introduction to Political Communication (Routledge, 4th edition, 2007), The Sociology of Journalism (Arnold, 1998) and Cultural Chaos (Routledge, 2006).), “Journalism and Democracy”, The Handbook of Journalism Studies, 1st Edition, edited by Karin Wahl-Jorgensen and Thomas Hanitzsch, Chapter 17, pg. 240-241, <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9780203877685/handbook-journalism-studies-karin-wahl-jorgensen-thomas-hanitzsch> NT

The Critique of Liberal Pluralism and Objectivity The Marxian critique, developed in the nineteenth century and still influential in media scholarship around the world, asserts that “freedom of the press,” and the “bourgeois” notion of freedom in general, is essentially an **ideological hoax, a form of false consciousness which merely legitimizes the status quo and distracts the masses from serious scrutiny of a system which exploits and oppresses them**. The media are structurally locked into pro-systemic bias, and will rarely give “objective” coverage to anything which seriously threatens the social order of capitalism. **The aspirations of objectivity, and of independence from the state, are masks for the production by the media of dominant ideology, or bourgeois hegemony, in the sphere of political coverage as elsewhere.** Marx and Engels developed this theory in the 1840s and after, in works such as The German Ideology (1976). It was then applied by the Bolsheviks to Soviet Russia, where journalists were required to renounce “bourgeois objectivism” and instead act as propagandists for the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular. The Bolsheviks developed on this basis an entirely different theory of journalism from that which prevailed in the capitalist world, and exported it to other states with Communist Party governments. The classic Four Theories of the Press (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm, 1963) set out the main differences between what it characterized as liberal pluralist theory on the one hand, and the authoritarian approach of the Communist-led states on the other (see Journalism Studies 3(1) for a retrospective on the Four Theories book). Though the Soviet Union is no more, the authoritarian approach continues to underpin the practice of political journalism in nominally socialist states such as Cuba and China. Journalism in these countries is institutionally part of the ideological apparatus of the state. Comparable rationales to those traditionally adopted by the Soviet communists and their like-minded parties support the censorial media policies of Islamic fundamentalist states. In Saudi Arabia and Iran, for example, it will be argued that Islamic beliefs and truths are not reflected in secular, liberal notions of pluralism and objectivity, and that CNN, the BBC and others are promoting ideologically loaded accounts of global political events which can reasonably be censored in favor of state-sanctioned journalism. Here again, as in Cuba or China, the demand is for journalists to actively support a dominant ideology imposed by the ruling political faction, albeit one based on religious affiliation rather than notions of class domination. The extent to which liberal journalism can contribute to the establishment and maintenance of democracy in these countries, and also in post-Soviet countries such as Russia which have tended to veer between the authoritarianism of old and the stated objective of building democracy and free media, has informed a sizeable body of research. Kalathil and Boas (2003) have compared the role of the media—and emerging technologies such as the Internet in particular—in eight countries, including China, Cuba, Singapore and Egypt. They conclude, as does Atkins’ (2002) comparative study of the role of journalism in Southeast Asia, that “overall, the Internet is challenging and helping to transform authoritarianism. Yet information technology alone is unlikely to bring about its demise” (Kalathil & Boas, 2003, p. x). **In advanced capitalist societies, meanwhile, scholars such as Chomsky and Herman have argued consistently against the validity of liberal journalism’s claims to freedom and objectivity, implicating journalists in the maintenance of a “national security state” propped up by propaganda and attempts at “brainwashing”** no less crude, they would assert, than that pursued by Pravda in the old Soviet Union (Chomsky & Herman, 1979). Others use different terminology and conceptualizations of the media-society relationship, but the core notion that political journalism is less about democratic scrutiny and accountability of the political elite than it is a vehicle for the “necessary illusions” (Chomsky, 1989) which prop up an unequal and exploitative capitalist system **remains prevalent in media sociology**, shaping a large body of research concerned with documenting the ways in which journalism **contributes to the reinforcement and reproduction of dominant ideas** and readings of events. The period since 9/11 and the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq have seen an upsurge in scholarly work of this kind, as in for example Philo and Berry’s Bad News From Israel. This critical content analysis of British TV news concludes that in coverage of the Israel-Palestine confl ict, Israeli views receive “preferential treatment”, and that there is “a consistent pattern on TV news in which Israeli perspectives tend to be highlighted and sometimes endorsed by journalists” (2004, p. 199). Although the BBC rejected allegations of systematic bias, its managers did accept that there was a diffi culty in providing viewers of TV news, given the nature of the form and the limits on space, with the context and background required for making sense of current events. Similar controversies have surrounded public service journalism in Australia and elsewhere. Other post-9/11 studies of news coverage of international politics include David Miller’s edited collection of critical essays about news coverage of Iraq, Tell Me Lies (2004), and work by Howard Tumber, Jerry Palmer and Frank Webster (Tumber & Palmer, 2004; Tumber & Webster, 2006) which reaches less critical conclusions on the question of TV news alleged biases. A recent edited volume by Sarah Maltby and Richard Keeble (2008) explores the role of journalism in post-9/11 conflict situations from a variety of perspectives, both scholarly and practitioner oriented.

#### Objectivity is a commodity peddled by the media to perpetuate capitalist propaganda under the guise of neutrality, mooting any antagonism to the system

Ryckewaert 18 (Anna Jakoba Ryckewaert is a Master of Science in Wetenschappen politics: international politics.) “ MEDIA FROM A SOCIAL CHANGE PERSPECTIVE”, pg. 43-47, <https://libstore.ugent.be/fulltxt/RUG01/002/482/560/RUG01-002482560_2018_0001_AC.pdf> NT

As was mentioned, the journalism historian Carey (2007, p. 12) claims that journalism emerged through a long and complex process of separating fact from fiction, and reporting and social commentary from other writing. This image suggests that fact and fiction were essential categories that had to be discovered by an often confused readership. The reality is that journalism took part in the creation of the notions “fact” and “objectivity”. **This evolution is, of course, closely linked to scientific developments, but in the field of journalism, it was equally a matter of creating a commodity that could be sold to a large readership:** “As many studies have shown, it was the penny press and its modern conception of ‘news’ that gave rise to the journalistic concern for factual accuracy […] This requirement of the ‘popular’ press of the nineteenth century to provide true information, accurate and ‘objective’ facts, was closely linked to its concern to unify; it clung to the ‘facts’ so that it could bring together readers who might well have different opinions on a subject, and hence reach the common denominator of an increasingly large readership. The spectacular growth of this readership led, therefore, to ‘the triumph of “news” over the editorial and of “facts” over opinion, and created ‘the journalist’s uneasy allegiance to objectivity’” (Muhlmann, 2008, p. 6) Journalism’s uneasy allegiance to objectivity gradually erased all notions of antagonism. Herman and Chomsky’s analysis of media industrialization (1994) needs to be placed in the light of this evolution. The watershed that took place in the second half of the nineteenth century was not only a matter of outcompeting radical media through liberalisation and concentration, it was also a fundamental change in the nature of journalism itself. **What replaced the radical working class media was not a similar type of media dispersing a different worldview; it was the creation of journalism as “‘facts’ acceptable to all”** (Muhlmann, 2008, p. 6), or the depoliticization of journalism. Wien (2005) argues that we could see the requirement for objectivity in disseminating news as the journalistic paradigm, adding that “it is one thing to operate with objectivity as a beacon, and something else to operationalise objectivity in the everyday task of journalism” (p. 3). The author argues that most journalism continues to use a binary, positivist concept of objectivity: “To be subjective is to say that one’s own assessments (attitudes and values) have influence on knowledge. To be objective is to say that one is content to present that which is not affected by one’ s own assessments, i.e., the facts” (Wien, 2005, p. 4). The problem, according to Wien (2005, p. 5), is that journalists must choose a context in which to place those facts, and this choice is a subjective one. Muhlmann (2008, p. 10) states that most researchers have emphasized the great epistemological poverty of the concrete rules regarding objectivity. One example the author gives, is the requirement observed by Gaye Tuchman (1978) to give readers material or verified facts: Often, rather than verify a fact ‘A’ stated by a person ‘X’, the journalist regards as a fact the statement ‘X said A’. Under the appearance of rigour, an obvious bias emerges, because if this statement is no more than a worthless opinion (A is untrue), it would be questionable to give it a place in the article. […] Tuchman observes that journalists often try to get round this difficulty of which they are aware, by giving at least one other opinion (‘Y said B’). But she is quick to point out that this addition does nothing to solve the problem, in reality: a new opinion is reported as a ‘fact’, when its content has no more been verified than that of the first. (Muhlmann, 2008, p. 11) By having to deal with opinions in a positivist conception of objectivity (one is either objective or subjective, and the journalist must be the former), these opinions are turned into reality. **In reference to Herman and Chomsky’s third propaganda “filter” (cf. supra), the opinions which are rendered objective are often those of government, business, and “experts” funded and approved by them.** This brings us to Mouffe’s claim that “the **point of convergence between objectivity and power is** precisely what we mean by **'hegemony'**” (Mouffe, 1998, n. p.). Poerksten, through a constructivist approach to journalism, reformulates the same idea as follows: Whoever successfully manages to establish their designations and descriptions of reality, whoever manages to make their interpretative terms appear to be the only legitimate interpretations and to universalise the group-linguistically negotiated system of semantics, will establish their view of the world — will in this way create the reality that will become the standard point of orientation for themselves and everybody else. (Poerksten,&2011,&p.&97) This creation of reality lies not only in spiral towards hegemonic articulation by elite sources. **By presenting opinions in the straight jacket of facts, any antagonism is muted.** If ‘X said A’ and ‘Y said B’ are facts, they cannot be confronted with each other in any real sense, since facts are not supposed to contradict each other. Such a representation of different positions is a mere assessment that they exist. It is clear that the positivist notion of objectivity is incompatible with any conception of journalism as an agonistic representative institution. It must be noted, however, that journalists are of course not unaware of this problem. Whereas many op them still cling to objectivity as a god term, **others have tried to reformulate the notion of objectivity** in terms of factuality, impartiality, truth, balance, non-partisanship, or neutral representation (Wien, 2005, p. 5). This effort has mostly led to a cul de sac of avoidance: Journalism thus faces the problem of having to define a problematic concept and doing so in a manner which one often does with such concepts: **it attempts to define the concept with the help of a bunch of equally problematic concepts,** which only contributed to increasing the quagmire of problematic, undefined concepts within journalism. (Wien, 2005, p. 8).

#### Journalistic responses to crises are seen as society having fulfilled its duty, becoming complacent and foregoing any tangible action

Dean 05 (Jodi Dean teaches political theory in upstate NY where she is also actively involved in grassroots political organizing. Raised in Mississippi and Alabama, she went north for college, earning her BA at Princeton University and her MA and PhD at Columbia University. Initially, her focus was on Soviet area studies. In her second year of graduate school, she switched to political theory, which was a good thing since the Soviet Union ceased to exist and the field dissolved. Her books take up questions of solidarity, the conditions of possibility for democracy, communicative capitalism, and the necessity of building a politics that has communism as its horizon. She has given invited lectures in art and academic venues all over the world.), “COMMUNICATIVE CAPITALISM: CIRCULATION AND THE FORECLOSURE OF POLITICS”, Cultural Politics, Volume 1, Issue 1, pg. 52-54, <https://commonconf.files.wordpress.com/2010/09/proofs-of-tech-fetish.pdf> NT

Although mainstream US media outlets provided the Bush administration with supportive, non-critical and even encouraging platforms for making his case for invading Iraq, critical perspectives were nonetheless well represented in the communications flow of mediated global capitalist technoculture. Alternative media, independent media and non-US media provided thoughtful reports, insightful commentary and critical evaluations of the “evidence” of “weapons of mass destruction” in Iraq. Amy Goodman’s syndicated radio program, “Democracy Now,” regularly broadcast shows intensely opposed to the militarism and unilateralism of the Bush administration’s national security policy. The Nation magazine offered detailed and nuanced critiques of various reasons introduced for attacking Iraq. Circulating on the Internet were lists with congressional phone and fax numbers, petitions and announcements for marches, protests and direct-action training sessions. As the march to war proceeded, thousands of bloggers commented on each step, referencing other media supporting their positions. When mainstream US news outlets failed to cover demonstrations such as the September protest of 400,000 people in London or the October march on Washington when 250,000 people surrounded the White House, myriad progressive, alternative and critical left news outlets supplied frequent and reliable information about the action on the ground. **All in all, a strong anti-war message was out there. But, the message was not received.** It circulated, reduced to the medium. Even when the White House acknowledged the massive worldwide demonstrations of February 15, 2003, Bush simply reiterated the fact that a message was out there, circulating – the protestors had the right to express their opinions. He didn’t actually respond to their message. He didn’t treat the words and actions of the protestors as sending a message to him to which he was in some sense obligated to respond. Rather, he acknowledged that there existed views different from his own. There were his views and there were other views; all had the right to exist, to be expressed – but that in no way meant, or so Bush made it seem, that these views were involved with each other. So, despite the terabytes of commentary and information, there wasn’t exactly a debate over the war. On the contrary, in the days and weeks prior to the US invasion of Iraq, the anti-war messages morphed into so much circulating content, just like all the other cultural effl uvia wafting through cyberia. We might express this disconnect between engaged criticism and national strategy in terms of a **distinction between politics as the circulation of content and politics as official policy**. On the one hand there is media chatter of various kinds – from television talking heads, radio shock jocks, and the gamut of print media to websites with RSS (Real Simple Syndication) feeds, blogs, e-mail lists and the proliferating versions of instant text messaging. In this dimension, politicians, governments and activists struggle for visibility, currency and, in the now quaint term from the dot.com years, mindshare. On the other hand are institutional politics, the day-to-day activities of bureaucracies, lawmakers, judges and the apparatuses of the police and national security states. These **components of the political system seem to run independently of the politics that circulates as content.** At fi rst glance, this distinction between politics as the circulation of content and politics as the activity of offi cials makes no sense. After all, the very premise of liberal democracy is the sovereignty of the people. And, governance by the people has generally been thought in terms of communicative freedoms of speech, assembly and the press, norms of publicity that emphasize transparency and accountability, and the deliberative practices of the public sphere. Ideally, the communicative interactions of the public sphere, what I’ve been referring to as the circulation of content and media chatter, are supposed to impact offi cial politics. In the United States today, however, they don’t, or, less bluntly put, **there is a signifi cant disconnect between politics circulating as content and offi cial politics.** Today, **the circulation of content in the dense, intensive networks of global communications relieves top-level actors (corporate, institutional and governmental) from the obligation to respond.** Rather than responding to messages sent by activists and critics, they counter with their own contributions to the circulating flow of communications, hoping that sufficient volume (whether in terms of number of contributions or the spectacular nature of a contribution) will give their contributions dominance or stickiness. Instead of engaged debates, instead of contestations employing common terms, points of reference or demarcated frontiers, **we confront a multiplication of resistances and assertions so extensive that it hinders the formation of strong counterhegemonies.** The proliferation, distribution, acceleration and intensifi cation of communicative access and opportunity, far from enhancing democratic governance or resistance, results in precisely the opposite – the **post-political formation of communicative capitalism**. Needless to say, I am not claiming that networked communications never facilitate political resistance. One of the most visible of the numerous examples to the contrary is perhaps the experience of B92 in Serbia. Radio B92 used the Internet to circumvent governmental censorship and disseminate news of massive demonstrations against the Milosevic regime (Matic and Pantic 1999). My point is that the political effi cacy of networked media depends on its context. Under conditions of the intensive and extensive proliferation of media, messages are more likely to get lost as mere contributions to the circulation of content. What enhances democracy in one context becomes a new form of hegemony in another. Or, the intense circulation of content in communicative capitalism forecloses the antagonism necessary for politics. In relatively closed societies, that antagonism is not only already there but also apparent at and as the very frontier between open and closed.

#### Best studies prove capitalism causes war, violence, decreased value to life, environmental destruction and extinction – it’s the greatest threat to society and is an a priori impact under any framework.

Ahmed 20.[Dr. Nafeez Ahmed is a bestselling author, investigative journalist, international security scholar, policy expert, film-maker, strategy & communications consultant, and change activist. The focus of Ahmed's work is to catalyse social change in the public interest by harnessing radical, systemic approaches to understanding the interconnections between the world's biggest problems, while developing and highlighting holistic strategies for social transformation. Whether it be foreign policy and terrorism, climate change and energy, or food and the economy, Nafeez deploys the techniques of critical, rigorous and interdisciplinary analysis to join the dots and challenge power, with a view to bring forth constructive change.] June 24th, 2020. Accessed 3/3/2021. “Capitalism is Destroying ‘Safe Operating Space’ for Humanity, Warn Scientists” <https://www.resilience.org/stories/2020-06-24/capitalism-is-destroying-safe-operating-space-for-humanity-warn-scientists//vg>

The COVID19 pandemic has exposed a strange anomaly in the global economy. If it doesn’t keep growing endlessly, it just breaks. Grow, or die. But there’s a deeper problem. New scientific research confirms that capitalism’s structural obsession with endless growth is destroying the very conditions for human survival on planet Earth. A landmark study in the journal Nature Communications, “Scientists’ warning on affluence” — by scientists in Australia, Switzerland and the UK — concludes that the most fundamental driver of environmental destruction is the overconsumption of the super-rich. This factor lies over and above other factors like fossil fuel consumption, industrial agriculture and deforestation: because it is overconsumption by the super-rich which is the chief driver of these other factors breaching key planetary boundaries. The paper notes that the richest 10 percent of people are responsible for up to 43 percent of destructive global environmental impacts. In contrast, the poorest 10 percent in the world are responsible just around 5 percent of these environmental impacts: The new paper is authored by Thomas Wiedmann of UNSW Sydney’s School of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Manfred Lenzen of the University of Sydney’s School of Physics, Lorenz T. Keysser of ETH Zürich’s Department of Environmental Systems Science, and Julia K. Steinberger of Leeds University’s School of Earth and Environment. It confirms that global structural inequalities in the distribution of wealth are intimately related to an escalating environmental crisis threatening the very existence of human societies. Synthesising knowledge from across the scientific community, the paper identifies capitalism as the main cause behind “alarming trends of environmental degradation” which now pose “existential threats to natural systems, economies and societies.” The paper concludes: “It is clear that prevailing capitalist, growth-driven economic systems have not only increased affluence since World War II, but have led to enormous increases in inequality, financial instability, resource consumption and environmental pressures on vital earth support systems.” Capitalism and the pandemic Thanks to the way capitalism works, the paper shows, the super-rich are incentivised to keep getting richer — at the expense of the health of our societies and the planet overall. The research provides an important scientific context for how we can understand many earlier scientific studies revealing that industrial expansion has hugely increased the risks of new disease outbreaks. Just last April, a paper in Landscape Ecology found that deforestation driven by increased demand for consumption of agricultural commodities or beef have increased the probability of ‘zoonotic’ diseases (exotic diseases circulating amongst animals) jumping to humans. This is because industrial expansion, driven by capitalist pressures, has intensified the encroachment of human activities on wildlife and natural ecosystems. Two years ago, another study in Frontiers of Microbiology concluded presciently that accelerating deforestation due to “demographic growth” and the associated expansion of “farming, logging, and hunting”, is dangerously transforming rural environments. More bat species carrying exotic viruses have ended up next to human dwellings, the study said. This is increasing “the risk of transmission of viruses through direct contact, domestic animal infection, or contamination by urine or faeces.” It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the COVID19 pandemic thus emerged directly from these rapidly growing impacts of human activities. As the new paper in Nature Communications confirms, these impacts have accelerated in the context of the fundamental operations of industrial capitalism. Eroding the ‘safe operating space’ The result is that capitalism is causing human societies to increasingly breach key planetary boundaries, such as land-use change, biosphere integrity and climate change. Remaining within these boundaries is essential to maintain what scientists describe as a “safe operating space” for human civilization. If those key ecosystems are disrupted, that “safe operating space” will begin to erode. The global impacts of the COVID19 pandemic are yet another clear indication that this process of erosion has already begun. “The evidence is clear,” write Weidmann and his co-authors. “Long-term and concurrent human and planetary wellbeing will not be achieved in the Anthropocene if affluent overconsumption continues, spurred by economic systems that exploit nature and humans. We find that, to a large extent, the affluent lifestyles of the world’s rich determine and drive global environmental and social impact. Moreover, international trade mechanisms allow the rich world to displace its impact to the global poor.” The new scientific research thus confirms that the normal functioning of capitalism is eroding the ‘safe space’ by which human civilisation is able to survive. The structures The paper also sets out how this is happening in some detail. The super-rich basically end up driving this destructive system forward in three key ways. Firstly, they are directly responsible for “biophysical resource use… through high consumption.” Secondly, they are “members of powerful factions of the capitalist class.” Thirdly, due to that positioning, they end up “driving consumption norms across the population.” But perhaps the most important insight of the paper is not that this is purely because the super-rich are especially evil or terrible compared to the rest of the population — but because of the systemic pressures produced by capitalist structures. The authors point out that: “Growth imperatives are active at multiple levels, making the pursuit of economic growth (net investment, i.e. investment above depreciation) a necessity for different actors and leading to social and economic instability in the absence of it.” At the core of capitalism, the paper observes, is a fundamental social relationship defining the way working people are systemically marginalised from access to the productive resources of the earth, along with the mechanisms used to extract these resources and produce goods and services. This means that to survive economically in this system, certain behavioural patterns become not just normalised, but seemingly entirely rational — at least from a limited perspective that ignores wider societal and environmental consequences. In the words of the authors: “In capitalism, workers are separated from the means of production, implying that they must compete in labour markets to sell their labour power to capitalists in order to earn a living.” Meanwhile, firms which own and control these means of production “need to compete in the market, leading to a necessity to reinvest profits into more efficient production processes to minimise costs (e.g. through replacing human labour power with machines and positive returns to scale), innovation of new products and/or advertising to convince consumers to buy more.” If a firm fails to remain competitive through such behaviours, “it either goes bankrupt or is taken over by a more successful business. Under normal economic conditions, this capitalist competition is expected to lead to aggregate growth dynamics.” The irony is that, as the paper also shows, the “affluence” accumulated by the super-rich isn’t correlated with happiness or well-being. Restructure The “hegemonic” dominance of global capitalism, then, is the principal obstacle to the systemic transformation needed to reduce overconsumption. So it’s not enough to simply try to “green” current consumption through technologies like renewable energy — we need to actually reduce our environmental impacts by changing our behaviours with a focus on cutting back our use of planetary resources: “Not only can a sufficient decoupling of environmental and detrimental social impacts from economic growth not be achieved by technological innovation alone, but also the profit-driven mechanism of prevailing economic systems prevents the necessary reduction of impacts and resource utilisation per se.” The good news is that it doesn’t have to be this way. The paper reviews a range of “bottom-up studies” showing that dramatic reductions in our material footprint are perfectly possible while still maintaining good material living standards. In India, Brazil and South Africa, “decent living standards” can be supported “with around 90 percent less per-capita energy use than currently consumed in affluent countries.” Similar possible reductions are feasible for modern industrial economies such as Australia and the US. By becoming aware of how the wider economic system incentivises behaviour that is destructive of human societies and planetary ecosystems critical for human survival, both ordinary workers and more wealthy sectors — including the super-rich — can work toward rewriting the global economic operating system. This can be done by restructuring ownership in firms, equalising relations with workers, and intentionally reorganising the way decisions are made about investment priorities. The paper points out that citizens and communities have a crucial role to play in getting organised, upgrading efforts for public education about these key issues, and experimenting with new ways to work together in bringing about “social tipping points” — points at which social action can catalyse mass change. While a sense of doom and apathy about the prospects for such change is understandable, mounting evidence based on systems science suggests that global capitalism as we know it is in a state of protracted crisis and collapse that began some decades ago. This research strongly supports the view that as industrial civilization reaches the last stages of its systemic life-cycle, there is unprecedented and increasing opportunity for small-scale actions and efforts to have large system-wide impacts. The new paper shows that the need for joined-up action is paramount: structural racism, environmental crisis, global inequalities are not really separate crises — but different facets of human civilization’s broken relationship with nature. Yet, of course, the biggest takeaway is that those who bear most responsibility for environmental destruction — those who hold the most wealth in our societies — urgently need to wake up to how their narrow models of life are, quite literally, destroying the foundations for human survival over the coming decades.

#### The alternative is anti-capitalist organizing via institutions – it is the only way to solve in the short and long term. It opens space for more radical transformation and is mutually exclusive with the aff in its explicit political agenda and partnership with the state.

Harvey 15 (David - Distinguished Professor of Anthropology and Geography at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, “Consolidating Power,” https://roarmag.org/magazine/david-harvey-consolidating-power//ghs-arc)

So, looking at examples from southern Europe—solidarity networks in Greece, self-organization in Spain or Turkey—these seem to be very crucial for building social movements around everyday life and basic needs these days. Do you see this as a promising approach? I think it is very promising, but there is a clear self-limitation in it, which is a problem for me. The self-limitation is the reluctance to take power at some point. Bookchin, in his last book, says that the problem with the anarchists is their denial of the significance of power and their inability to take it. Bookchin doesn’t go this far, but I think it is the refusal to see the state as a possible partner to radical transformation. There is a tendency to regard the state as being the enemy, the 100 percent enemy. And there are plenty of examples of repressive states out of public control where this is the case. No question: the capitalist state has to be fought, but without dominating state power and without taking it on you quickly get into the story of what happened for example in 1936 and 1937 in Barcelona and then all over Spain. By refusing to take the state at a moment where they had the power to do it, the revolutionaries in Spain allowed the state to fall back into the hands of the bourgeoisie and the Stalinist wing of the Communist movement—and the state got reorganized and smashed the resistance. That might be true for the Spanish state in the 1930s, but if we look at the contemporary neoliberal state and the retreat of the welfare state, what is left of the state to be conquered, to be seized? To begin with, the left is not very good at answering the question of how we build massive infrastructures. How will the left build the Brooklyn bridge, for example? Any society relies on big infrastructures, infrastructures for a whole city—like the water supply, electricity and so on. I think that there is a big reluctance among the left to recognize that therefore we need some different forms of organization. There are wings of the state apparatus, even of the neoliberal state apparatus, which are therefore terribly important—the center of disease control, for example. How do we respond to global epidemics such as Ebola and the like? You can’t do it in the anarchist way of DIY-organization. There are many instances where you need some state-like forms of infrastructure. We can’t confront the problem of global warming through decentralized forms of confrontations and activities alone. One example that is often mentioned, despite its many problems, is the Montreal Protocol to phase out the use of chlorofluorocarbon in refrigerators to limit the depletion of the ozone layer. It was successfully enforced in the 1990s but it needed some kind of organization that is very different to the one coming out of assembly-based politics. From an anarchist perspective, I would say that it is possible to replace even supra-national institutions like the WHO with confederal organizations which are built from the bottom up and which eventually arrive at worldwide decision-making. Maybe to a certain degree, but we have to be aware that there will always be some kind of hierarchies and we will always face problems like accountability or the right of recourse. There will be complicated relationships between, for example, people dealing with the problem of global warming from the standpoint of the world as a whole and from the standpoint of a group that is on the ground, let’s say in Hanover or somewhere, and that wonders: ‘why should we listen to what they are saying?’ So you believe this would require some form of authority? No, there will be authority structures anyway—there will always be. I have never been in an anarchist meeting where there was no secret authority structure. There is always this fantasy of everything being horizontal, but I sit there and watch and think: ‘oh god, there is a whole hierarchical structure in here—but it’s covert.’ Coming back to the recent protests around the Mediterranean: many movements have focused on local struggles. What is the next step to take towards social transformation? At some point we have to create organizations which are able to assemble and enforce social change on a broader scale. For example, will Podemos in Spain be able to do that? In a chaotic situation like the economic crisis of the last years, it is important for the left to act. If the left doesn’t make it, then the right-wing is the next option. I think—and I hate to say this—but I think the left has to be more pragmatic in relation to the dynamics going on right now. More pragmatic in what sense? Well, why did I support SYRIZA even though it is not a revolutionary party? Because it opened a space in which something different could happen and therefore it was a progressive move for me. It is a bit like Marx saying: the first step to freedom is the limitation of the length of the working day. Very narrow demands open up space for much more revolutionary outcomes, and even when there isn’t any possibility for any revolutionary outcomes, we have to look for compromise solutions which nevertheless roll back the neoliberal austerity nonsense and open the space where new forms of organizing can take place. Narrow demands open up space for more revolutionary outcomes. For example, it would be interesting if Podemos looked towards organizing forms of democratic confederalism—because in some ways Podemos originated with lots of assembly-type meetings taking place all over Spain, so they are very experienced with the assembly structure. The question is how they connect the assembly-form to some permanent forms of organization concerning their upcoming position as a strong party in Parliament. This also goes back to the question of consolidating power: you have to find ways to do so, because without it the bourgeoisie and corporate capitalism are going to find ways to reassert it and take the power back. What do you think about the dilemma of solidarity networks filling the void after the retreat of the welfare state and indirectly becoming a partner of neoliberalism in this way? There are two ways of organizing. One is a vast growth of the NGO sector, but a lot of that is externally funded, not grassroots, and doesn’t tackle the question of the big donors who set the agenda—which won’t be a radical agenda. Here we touch upon the privatization of the welfare state. This seems to me to be very different politically from grassroots organizations where people are on their own, saying: ‘OK, the state doesn’t take care of anything, so we are going to have to take care of it by ourselves.’ That seems to me to be leading to forms of grassroots organization with a very different political status. But how to avoid filling that gap by helping, for example, unemployed people not to get squeezed out by neoliberal state? Well there has to be an anti-capitalist agenda, so that when the group works with people everybody knows that it is not only about helping them to cope but that there is an organized intent to politically change the system in its entirety. This means having a very clear political project, which is problematic with decentralized, non-homogenous types of movements where somebody works one way, others work differently and there is no collective or common project. This connects to the very first question you raised: there is no coordination of what the political objectives are. And the danger is that you just help people cope and there will be no politics coming out of it. For example, Occupy Sandy helped people get back to their houses and they did terrific work, but in the end they did what the Red Cross and federal emergency services should have done. The end of history seems to have passed already. Looking at the actual conditions and concrete examples of anti-capitalist struggle, do you think “winning” is still an option? Definitely, and moreover, you have occupied factories in Greece, solidarity economies across production chains being forged, radical democratic institutions in Spain and many beautiful things happening in many other places. There is a healthy growth of recognition that we need to be much broader concerning politics among all these initiatives. The Marxist left tends to be a little bit dismissive of some of this stuff and I think they are wrong. But at the same time I don’t think that any of this is big enough on its own to actually deal with the fundamental structures of power that need to be challenged. Here we talk about nothing less than a state. So the left will have to rethink its theoretical and tactical apparatus.

#### The ROTJ is to break down neoliberal systems of power - Debate should be a pedagogical space in which to produce emancipatory education and nurture radical agency—our framing is a pre-requisite to ethical political engagement, necessary for anti-capitalist solidarity, and determines whether the project of the 1AC is a good idea.

**Giroux 20.** [Henry Armand Giroux is an American and Canadian scholar and cultural critic. One of the founding theorists of critical pedagogy in the United States, he is best known for his pioneering work in public pedagogy, cultural studies, youth studies, higher education, media studies, and critical theory. 6-19-2020. Accessed 12/30/2020. “Racist Violence Can’t Be Separated from the Violence of Neoliberal Capitalism” <https://socialistproject.ca/2020/06/racist-violence-neoliberal-capitalism//vg>

It should be clear that questions of economic and social justice cannot be addressed by a neoliberal pedagogy that enshrines self-interest and privatization while converting every social problem into individualized market solutions or regressive matters of personal responsibility. Under neoliberalism’s disimagination machine, individual responsibility is coupled with an ethos of greed, avarice, and personal gain. One consequence is the tearing up of social solidarities, public values, and an almost pathological disdain for democracy. This radical form of privatization is also a powerful force for the rise of fascist politics because it depoliticizes individuals, immerses them in the logic of social Darwinism, and makes them susceptible to the dehumanization of those considered a threat or disposable. Just as the spread of the pandemic virus in the United States was not an innocent act of nature, neither is the rise and pervasive grip of inequality. What is clear is that neoliberal support for unbridled individualism has weakened democratic pressures and eroded democracy and equality as governing principles. Moreover, as a mode of public pedagogy, it has undercut social provisions, the social contract, and support for public goods such as education, public health, essential infrastructure, public transportation, and the most basic elements of the welfare state. As a form of pedagogical practice, neoliberalism has morphed into a form of pandemic pedagogy that sacrifices social needs and human life in the name of an economic rationality that values reviving economic growth over human rights. As a lived system of meaning and values, self-reliance and rugged individualism are the only categories available for shaping how individuals view themselves, and their relationship to others and to the planet. The individualization of everyone and the reduction of social problems to private troubles is paralleled by sanctioning a world marked by borders, walls, racism, hate, and a rejection of government intervention in the interest of the common good. Most importantly, neoliberal individualization personalizes power, creating a depoliticized subject whose only obligation as a citizen is defined by consuming and living in a world free from ethical and social responsibilities. In many ways, it does not just empty politics of any substance, it destroys its emancipatory prospects. The neoliberal strategists use education not only to mask their abuses and the effects of their criminogenic policies, they also – in a time of crisis, when dissatisfaction of the masses might lead to chaos, revolts, and dangerous levels of resistance – move dangerously close to creating the conditions for a fascist politics. The noted theologian Frei Betto is right in stating that under such conditions, “…they cover up the causes of social ills and cover up their effects with ideologies that, by obscuring causes, fuel mood in the face of the effects. That’s why neoliberalism is now showing its authoritarian face – building walls that divide countries and ethnic groups, executive power over legislature and judiciary, disinformation about digital networks, the cult of the homeland, the brazen offensive against human rights.” Neoliberalism and its regressive notion of individualism and individual responsibility has undermined the belief that human beings both make the world and can change it. The pandemic has ushered in a crisis that undermines that belief and opens the door for rethinking what kind of society and notion of politics will be faithful to the creation of a socialist democracy that speaks to the core values of justice, equality, and solidarity. Under such circumstances, private resistance must give way to collective resistance, and personal and political rights must include economic rights. If inequality is to be defeated, the social state must replace the corporate state, and social rights must be guaranteed for all. There can be no adequate struggle for economic justice and social equality unless economic inequality on a global level is addressed along with a movement for climate justice, the elimination of systemic racism, and a halt to the spiraling militarism that has resulted in endless wars. **This can only take place if the anti-democratic ideology of neoliberalism, with its collapse of the public into the private and its institutional structures of domination, are fully addressed and discredited.** Étienne Balibar is right in stating that the triumph of neoliberalism has resulted in the “death zones of humanity.” Following Balibar, what must be made clear is that neoliberal capitalism is itself a pandemic and a dangerous harbinger of an updated fascist politics. Overcoming Pandemic Pedagogy The kinds of societies that will emerge after the pandemic is up for grabs. In some cases, the crisis will give way to authoritarian regimes such as Chile, Hungary, and Turkey, all of which have used the urgency of COVID-19 as an excuse to impose more state control and surveillance, squelch dissent, eliminate civil liberties, and concentrate power in the hands of an authoritarian political class. As is well documented, history in a time of crisis also has the potential to change dominant ideologies, rethink the meaning of governance, and enlarge the sphere of justice and equality through a vision that fights for a more generous and inclusive politics. It is crucial to rethink the project of politics in order to imagine forms of resistance that are collective, inclusive and global, and capable of producing new democratic arrangements for social life, more radical values, and a “global economy which will no longer be at the mercy of market mechanisms.” This is a politics that must move beyond siloed identities and fractured political factions in order to build transnational solidarities in the service of an alternative radically democratic society. Making the pedagogical more political means challenging those forms of pandemic pedagogy that turn politics into theater, a favorite tactic of Trump. In this case, the performance works to suspend disbelief, hold power accountable, and unravel one’s sense of critical agency. Pandemic pedagogy does more than undermine critical thinking and informed judgments; it dissolves the line between the truth and lies, fantasy and reality, and in doing so, destroys the foundation for understanding, engaging, and promoting that social and economic justice. The endgame under the rubric of a pandemic pedagogy is not simply the destruction of the truth, but the elimination of democracy itself. Central to developing an alternative democratic vision is development of a language that refuses to look away and be commodified. Such a language should be able to break through the continuity and consensus of common sense and appeal to the natural order of things. At stake here is the need to reclaim both critical and redemptive elements of a radical democracy in order to address the full spectrum of violence that structures institutions and everyday life in the United States. This is a language connected to the acquisition of civic literacy, and it demands a different regime of desires and identifications to enable us to move from “shock and stunned silence toward a coherent visceral speech, one as strong as the force that is charging at us.” Of course, there is more at stake here than a struggle over meaning; there is also the struggle over power, over the need to create a formative culture that will **produce informed critical agents who will fight for and contribute to a broad social movement that will translate meaning into a fierce struggle for economic, political, and social justice**. Agency in this sense must be connected to a notion of possibility and education in the service of radical change. **Reimagining the future only becomes meaningful when it is rooted in a fierce struggle against the horrors and totalitarian practices of a pandemic pedagogy that falsely claims that it exists outside of history.** Václav Havel, the late Czech political dissident-turned-politician, once argued that politics follows culture, by which he meant that changing consciousness is the first step toward building mass movements of resistance. What is crucial here in the age of multiple crises is a thorough grasp of the notion that critical and engaged forms of agency are a product of emancipatory education. Moreover, at the heart of any viable notion of politics is the recognition that politics begins with attempts to change the way people think, act, and feel with respect to both how they view themselves and their relations to others. There is more to agency than the neoliberal emphasis on the “empire of the self,” with its unchecked belief in the virtues of a form of self-interest that despises the bonds of sociality, solidarity, and community. The US is in the midst of a political and pedagogical crisis. This is a crisis defined not only by a brutalizing racism and massive inequality, but also by a constitutional crisis produced by a growing authoritarianism that has been in the making for some time. The recent attacks by the police on journalists, peaceful protesters, and even elderly people marching for racial justice, echoes the violence of the Brownshirts in the 1930s. Let’s stop the futile debate about whether or not the US is in the midst of a fascist state and shift the register to the more serious question of how to resist it and restore a semblance of real democracy. Under such circumstances, education should be viewed as central to politics, and it plays a crucial role in producing informed judgments, actions, morality, and social responsibility at the forefront not only of agency, but politics itself. In this scenario, truth and politics mutually inform each other to erupt in a pedagogical awakening at the moment when the rules are broken. Taking risks becomes a necessity, self-reflection narrates its capacity for critically engaged agency, and thinking the impossible is not an option, but a necessity. Without an informed and educated citizenry, democracy can lead to tyranny, even fascism. Trump represents the malignant presence of a fascism that never dies and is ready to re-emerge at different times in different context in sometimes not-so-recognizable forms. The COVID-19 crisis and the pandemic of inequality and racism have revealed elements of a fascist politics that are more than abstractions. The struggle against a fascist politics is now visible in the rebellions taking place across the United States. While there are no political guarantees for a victory, there is a new sense that the future can be changed in the image of a just and sustainable society. There is a new energy for reform taking place in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd. Massive protests for racial, economic, and social justice are emerging all over the globe. As I have argued in The Terror of the Unforeseen, at stake here is the need for these protests to transition from a pedagogical moment and collective outburst of moral anger to a progressive international movement that is well organized and unified. Such a movement must build solidarity among different groups, imagine new forms of social life, make the impossible possible, and produce a revolutionary project in defense of equality, social justice, and popular sovereignty. The racial, class, ecological, and public health crisis facing the globe can only be understood as part of a comprehensive crisis of the totality. **Immediate solutions such as defunding the police and improving community services are important, but they do not deal with the larger issue of eliminating a neoliberal system structured in massive racial and economic inequalities**. David Harvey is right in arguing that the “immediate task is nothing more nor less than the self-conscious construction of a **new political framework for approaching the question of inequality**, through a deep and profound critique of our economic and social system.” This is a crisis in which different threads of oppression must be understood as part of the general crisis of capitalism. The various protests now evolving internationally at the popular level offer the promise of new global anti-fascist and anti-capitalist movements. In the current moment, democracy may be under a severe threat and appear frighteningly vulnerable, but with young people and others rising up across the globe – inspired, energized and marching in the streets – the future of a radical democracy is waiting to breathe again. •

## Case

#### Social relations in the form of media are coopted for capitalist production and exploited even prior to the formation of a physical commodity

Dean 14 (Jodi Dean teaches political theory in upstate NY where she is also actively involved in grassroots political organizing. Raised in Mississippi and Alabama, she went north for college, earning her BA at Princeton University and her MA and PhD at Columbia University. Initially, her focus was on Soviet area studies. In her second year of graduate school, she switched to political theory, which was a good thing since the Soviet Union ceased to exist and the field dissolved. Her books take up questions of solidarity, the conditions of possibility for democracy, communicative capitalism, and the necessity of building a politics that has communism as its horizon. She has given invited lectures in art and academic venues all over the world.), “COMMUNICATIVE CAPITALISM AND CLASS STRUGGLE”, Spheres Journal for Digital Cultures, pg. 4-5 NT

COMMUNICATIVE CAPITALISM Communicative capitalism refers to the form of late capitalism in which values heralded as central to democracy materialize in networked communications technologies. Ideals of access, inclusion, discussion and participation are realized through expansions, intensifications and interconnections of global telecommunications. In communicative capitalism, capitalist **productivity derives from its expropriation and exploitation of communicative processes.**  This does not mean that information technologies have replaced manufacturing; in fact, they drive a wide variety of mining, chemical, and biotechnological industries. Nor does it mean that networked computing has enhanced productivity outside the production of networked computing itself. Rather, it means that capitalism has subsumed communication such that communication does not provide a critical outside. **Communication serves capital**, whether in affective forms of care for producers and consumers, the mobilization of sharing and expression as instruments for “human relations” in the workplace, or **contributions to ubiquitous media circuits**. Other names for communicative capitalism are knowledge economy, information society, and cognitive capitalism. Although they are all trying to designate the same formation, each highlights something different. Knowledge points to combinations of skill and content (know-how and know-that); information point just to content, although its circulatory systems are implied. Cognitive is too narrow and is linked to the idea of immaterial labor, which has rightly been subjected to thorough critique. I highlight communication in part because I want to underscore the impact of this iteration of capitalism on democracy: it subsumes it, eliminating its capacity to designate a critical gap within the social field. What Jürgen Habermas theorized as communicative action doesn’t provide a critical alternative to instrumental reason and the one-dimensional society. It doesn’t, because communication has become a primary means for capitalist expropriation and exploitation. **Linguistic, affective, and unconscious being together, flows and processes constitutive not just of being human but of broader relationality and belonging, have been co-opted for capitalist production**. Marx’s analysis of value in Capital, helps explain how communication can be a vehicle for capitalist subsumption. In his wellknown discussion of the commodity, Marx considers how it is that different sorts of goods can be exchanged with one another. His answer is human labor; understood as quanta of time, labor renders different goods commensurable with one another. But how is this possible? Why would an hour of mining labor be commensurate with an hour of farming labor? The answer involves the fundamentally social character of labor. What is common to different kinds of human labor is that they are all labor in the abstract, components of the larger homogeneous mass of human labor. Labor, and hence value, is inextricable from the relations of production and reproduction constitutive of society. Products of labor are “crystals of this social substance, common to them all,” that is to say, values. Communicative capitalism seizes, privatizes, and attempts to monetize the social substance without waiting for its crystallization in products of labor. It doesn’t depend on the commodity-thing. **It directly exploits the social relation at the heart of value. Social relations don’t have to take the fantastic form of the commodity to generate value for capitalism.** Via networked, personalized communication and information technologies, capitalism has found a more straightforward way to appropriate value.

#### Journalistic objectivity shields the press from accountability and facilitates the rise of populism

Panievsky 21 (Ayala Panievsky is a PhD student, Sociology department, University of Cambridge; Gates Cambridge Scholarship with an MA in Political Communications, Goldsmiths, University of London.) “Covering Populist Media Criticism: When Journalists’ Professional Norms Turn Against Them”, University of Cambridge, International Journal of Communication 15(2021), 2136–2155, pg. 2139-2140, <https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/15299/3435> NT

The research on professionalism in journalism sheds light on the dilemmas facing journalists covering anti-media populism. First, **journalistic professional norms, and especially objectivity**, have been described in the literature **as benefitting high-ranking officials and members of the elites** (Gans, 1979; Tuchman, 1978). Because elite figures and institutions are considered legitimate sources of knowledge, quoting them becomes a convenient way for journalists to create the impression of neutrality and evade accountability. Traditional news values, which determine the level of “newsworthiness” that journalists apply to certain stories, have also been regularly identified by scholars as favoring the elites, thus combining with journalistic norms to advance the agenda of powerful social actors (Harcup & O’Neill, 2017). **Professional norms and routines have also been depicted by scholars as encouraging the news media to amplify extremist and populist politicians.** **Ideals such as balanced reporting, it has been argued, encourage even-handedness and false equivalences, thus guaranteeing unjustified attention to marginal actors** (Bennett, 2012). News values such as drama, conflict, and unexpectedness, magnified by the media’s commercial incentives, have also long been seen as benefiting populist politics (Mazzoleni, 2014; Wodak, 2015). **The rise of populists to power thus combines both liabilities of journalistic norms and news values—advancing the powerful on the one hand and advancing the populist on the other—and enables populist leaders to take over the news cycle.** The news media is therefore expected to amplify hostile populist leaders both as outrageous provocateurs and as members of the powerful elite. At the same time, professional norms and values have been considered a valuable shield that defends journalists against external pressures and criticism. The idea of professionalism as empowering journalists has been mainly expressed by two groups. For liberal-pluralists, journalistic professionalism has been aimed at guaranteeing journalists’ autonomy, allowing them “to protect themselves against pressure and intrusion from external actors” (Waisbord, 2013, p. 24). For critical scholarship, journalistic norms were a “defensive strategic ritual,” shielding journalists against (well-deserved) criticism, embarrassment, and lawsuits (Tuchman, 1972). From both perspectives, however, professional norms and practices have been considered a safeguard protecting journalists against those who seek—justifiably or not—to question their credibility and legitimacy. What happens, though, when populists in power turn against the media? Do journalistic norms serve as a shield, defending journalists’ reputation and independence, or as a weapon, promoting journalists’ provocative and powerful critics? While the existing literature has already noted the importance of professionalism when discussing journalists’ responses to populist criticism (Koliska et al., 2020; Krämer & Langmann, 2020), this article goes further to examine which strategies the commitment to professionalism stimulates. How do journalists’ abstract calls to cover hostile populism “professionally” translate into actual decision-making considerations? Clearly, professionalism or objectivity cannot be taken as unambiguous concepts that naturally turn into a series of inevitable practices. Studying how journalists operationalize these notions is therefore crucial for understanding how journalists cope (or fail to cope) with current political challenges. The empirical contribution of this article thus illustrates the complicated role of journalistic professionalism in journalists’ attempts to defend themselves against the populist challenge. Its theoretical contribution is the suggestion to conceptualize anti-media populism as a form of discursive censorship. By approaching this topic through the Israeli case, this article also purports to expand the scope of the research, demonstrating the different faces that the intersection of populism and journalism may take in different societies.

#### False tales of objectivity and attacks on the media threaten democracy

Wijnberg 17 (Rob Wijnberg (1982) is the founding editor of The Correspondent. At age 27, he became Europe's youngest editor-in-chief at Dutch print daily nrc.next. He studied philosophy at the University of Amsterdam and has written six books on news, media and philosophy.), “Why objective journalism is a misleading and dangerous illusion”, The Correspondent, 10-7-17, <https://thecorrespondent.com/6138/why-objective-journalism-is-a-misleading-and-dangerous-illusion/157316940-eb6c348e> NT

3. **Objectivity threatens democracy** News is one of the most important sources of information in a democratic society. Today more than ever, it determines what we know, understand, and think about the world. It influences our voting behavior and how we see other people, cultures, and countries. To a large degree, it even shapes our image of ourselves. Our view of the world is increasingly fueled by half-truths, whole fairytales, and bald-faced lies issuing from the uppermost ranks of global politics, amplified by the loudest yellers in domestic politics, and spread across millions of phones, laptops, and TVs in milliseconds. Today it’s more crucial than ever that journalism stand for something. We must commit to the values that are essential to a democratic society: to a check on power, to the pursuit of truth, to providing context and perspective. When the president of the United States fabricates the number of attendees at his inauguration and then lashes out at every media organization that presents the evidence to show he’s lying, it’s not enough to report “Trump accuses media despite ample counterevidence,” as the NOS news did. Or to broadcast some even-handed variant that leaves the public in the lurch: “So-and-so reports X number of people, Trump says there were Y. And now over to Philip with the weather.” Instead, **you need to clearly announce that one of the world’s most powerful politicians is demonstrably lying yet again**. The New York Times did a better job of this, with its story "With False Claims, Trump Attacks Media"And you’d better figure out why. The Washington Post provided an excellent explanation of why Trump ordered his press chief to peddle lies.Meanwhile, you should be keeping track The award-winning website Politifact.com keeps an eye on all Trump’s campaign promises.of his actions and not just his words. **Otherwise, “not taking a position” means being not only a mouthpiece for power but a conduit for lies.** If demagogues loathe political correctness, journalistic correctness is their best friend. And democracy’s no match for that

#### Objectivity doesn’t change minds – empirically proven that presenting people with facts proving they’re wrong makes them double down on their beliefs – turns case

Beck 19 (Julie Beck is a senior editor at The Atlantic, where she oversees the Family section, and is the creator of “The Friendship Files.”), “THIS ARTICLE WON’T CHANGE YOUR MIND”, The Atlantic, 12-11-19, <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2017/03/this-article-wont-change-your-mind/519093/> NT

The theory of cognitive dissonance—the extreme discomfort of simultaneously holding two thoughts that are in conflict—was developed by the social psychologist Leon Festinger in the 1950s. In a famous study, Festinger and his colleagues embedded themselves with a doomsday prophet named Dorothy Martin and her cult of followers who believed that spacemen called the Guardians were coming to collect them in flying saucers, to save them from a coming flood. Needless to say, no spacemen (and no flood) ever came, but Martin just kept revising her predictions. Sure, the spacemen didn’t show up today, but they were sure to come tomorrow, and so on. The researchers watched with fascination as the believers kept on believing, despite all the evidence that they were wrong. “A man with a conviction is a hard man to change,” Festinger, Henry Riecken, and Stanley Schacter wrote in When Prophecy Fails, their 1957 book about this study. “Tell him you disagree and he turns away. Show him facts or figures and he questions your sources. Appeal to logic and he fails to see your point … Suppose that he is presented with evidence, unequivocal and undeniable evidence, that his belief is wrong: what will happen? The individual will frequently emerge, not only unshaken, but even more convinced of the truth of his beliefs than ever before.” This doubling down in the face of conflicting evidence is a way of reducing the discomfort of dissonance, and is part of a set of behaviors known in the psychology literature as “motivated reasoning.” Motivated reasoning is how people convince themselves or remain convinced of what they want to believe—they seek out agreeable information and learn it more easily; and they avoid, ignore, devalue, forget, or argue against information that contradicts their beliefs. It starts at the borders of attention—what people even allow to breach their bubbles. In a 1967 study, researchers had undergrads listen to some pre-recorded speeches, with a catch—the speeches were pretty staticky. But, the participants could press a button that reduced the static for a few seconds if they wanted to get a clearer listen. Sometimes the speeches were about smoking—either linking it to cancer, or disputing that link—and sometimes it was a speech attacking Christianity. Students who smoked were very eager to tune in to the speech that suggested cigarettes might not cause cancer, whereas nonsmokers were more likely to slam on the button for the antismoking speech. Similarly, the more-frequent churchgoers were happy to let the anti-Christian speech dissolve into static while the less religious would give the button a few presses. Outside of a lab, this kind of selective exposure is even easier. You can just switch off the radio, change channels, only like the Facebook pages that give you the kind of news you prefer. You can construct a pillow fort of the information that’s comfortable. Most people aren’t totally ensconced in a cushiony cave, though. They build windows in the fort, they peek out from time to time, they go for long strolls out in the world. And so, they will occasionally encounter information that suggests something they believe is wrong. A lot of these instances are no big deal, and people change their minds if the evidence shows they should—you thought it was supposed to be nice out today, you step out the door and it’s raining, you grab an umbrella. Simple as that. But if the thing you might be wrong about is a belief that’s deeply tied to your identity or worldview—the guru you’ve dedicated your life to is accused of some terrible things, the cigarettes you’re addicted to can kill you—well, then people become logical Simone Bileses, doing all the mental gymnastics it takes to remain convinced that they’re right. People see evidence that disagrees with them as weaker, because ultimately, they’re asking themselves fundamentally different questions when evaluating that evidence, depending on whether they want to believe what it suggests or not, according to psychologist Tom Gilovich. “For desired conclusions,” he writes, “it is as if we ask ourselves ‘Can I believe this?’, but for unpalatable conclusions we ask, ‘Must I believe this?’” People come to some information seeking permission to believe, and to other information looking for escape routes. In 1877, the philosopher William Kingdon Clifford wrote an essay titled “The Ethics of Belief,” in which he argued: “It is wrong always, everywhere, and for anyone to believe anything on insufficient evidence.” Lee McIntyre takes a similarly moralistic tone in his 2015 book Respecting Truth: Willful Ignorance in the Internet Age: “The real enemy of truth is not ignorance, doubt, or even disbelief,” he writes. “It is false knowledge.” Whether it’s unethical or not is kind of beside the point, because people are going to be wrong and they’re going to believe things on insufficient evidence. And their understandings of the things they believe are often going to be incomplete—even if they’re correct. How many people who (rightly) believe climate change is real could actually explain how it works? And as the philosopher and psychologist William James noted in an address rebutting Clifford’s essay, religious faith is one domain that, by definition, requires a person to believe without proof. Still, all manner of falsehoods—conspiracy theories, hoaxes, propaganda, and plain old mistakes—do pose a threat to truth when they spread like fungus through communities and take root in people’s minds. But the inherent contradiction of false knowledge is that only those on the outside can tell that it’s false. It’s hard for facts to fight it because to the person who holds it, it feels like truth. At first glance, it’s hard to see why evolution would have let humans stay resistant to facts. “You don’t want to be a denialist and say, ‘Oh, that’s not a tiger, why should I believe that’s a tiger?’ because you could get eaten,” says McIntyre, a research fellow at the Center for Philosophy and History of Science at Boston University. But from an evolutionary perspective, there are more important things than truth. Take the same scenario McIntyre mentioned and flip it on its head—you hear a growl in the bushes that sounds remarkably tiger-like. The safest thing to do is probably high-tail it out of there, even if it turns out it was just your buddy messing with you. Survival is more important than truth. “Having social support, from an evolutionary standpoint, is far more important than knowing the truth.” And of course, truth gets more complicated when it’s a matter of more than just “Am I about to be eaten or not?” As Pascal Boyer, an anthropologist and psychologist at Washington University in St. Louis points out in his forthcoming book Minds Make Societies: How Cognition Explains the World Humans Create: “The natural environment of human beings, like the sea for dolphins or the ice for polar bears, is information provided by others, without which they could not forage, hunt, choose mates, or build tools. Without communication, no survival for humans.” In this environment, people with good information are valued. But expertise comes at a cost—it requires time and work. If you can get people to believe you’re a good source without actually being one, you get the benefits without having to put in the work. Liars prosper, in other words, if people believe them. So some researchers have suggested motivated reasoning may have developed as a “shield against manipulation.” A tendency to stick with what they already believe could help protect people from being taken in by every huckster with a convincing tale who comes along.

#### Objectivity doesn’t change polarization or misinformation – ideological echo chambers mean fact-checking only makes people buckle-down further

Beck 19 (Julie Beck is a senior editor at The Atlantic, where she oversees the Family section, and is the creator of “The Friendship Files.”), “THIS ARTICLE WON’T CHANGE YOUR MIND”, The Atlantic, 12-11-19, <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2017/03/this-article-wont-change-your-mind/519093/> NT

“Partisanship has been revealed as the strongest force in U.S. public life—stronger than any norms, independent of any facts,” Vox’s David Roberts wrote in his extensive breakdown of the factors that influenced the election. The many things that, during the campaign, might have seemed to render Trump unelectable—boasting about sexual assault, encouraging violence at his rallies, attacking an American-born judge for his Mexican heritage—did not ultimately cost him the support of the majority of his party. Republican commentators and politicians even decried Trump as not a true conservative. But he was the Republican nominee, and he rallied the Republican base. In one particularly potent example of party trumping fact, when shown photos of Trump’s inauguration and Barack Obama’s side by side, in which Obama clearly had a bigger crowd, some Trump supporters identified the bigger crowd as Trump’s. When researchers explicitly told subjects which photo was Trump’s and which was Obama’s, a smaller portion of Trump supporters falsely said Trump’s photo had more people in it. While this may appear to be a remarkable feat of self-deception, Dan Kahan thinks it’s likely something else. It’s not that they really believed there were more people at Trump’s inauguration, but saying so was a way of showing support for Trump. “People knew what was being done here,” says Kahan, a professor of law and psychology at Yale University. “They knew that someone was just trying to show up Trump or trying to denigrate their identity.” The question behind the question was, “Whose team are you on?” In these charged situations, people often don’t engage with information as information but as a marker of identity. Information becomes tribal. In a New York Times article called “The Real Story About Fake News Is Partisanship,” Amanda Taub writes that sharing fake news stories on social media that denigrate the candidate you oppose “is a way to show public support for one’s partisan team—roughly the equivalent of painting your face with team colors on game day.” This sort of information tribalism isn’t a consequence of people lacking intelligence or of an inability to comprehend evidence. Kahan has previously written that whether people “believe” in evolution or not has nothing to do with whether they understand the theory of it—saying you don’t believe in evolution is just another way of saying you’re religious. Similarly, a recent Pew study found that a high level of science knowledge didn’t make Republicans any more likely to say they believed in climate change, though it did for Democrats. What’s more, being intelligent and informed can often make the problem worse. The higher someone’s IQ, the better they are at coming up with arguments to support a position—but only a position they already agree with, as one study showed. High levels of knowledge make someone more likely to engage in motivated reasoning—perhaps because they have more to draw on when crafting a counterargument. **People also learn selectively—they’re better at learning facts that confirm their worldview than facts that challenge it. And media coverage makes that worse. While more news coverage of a topic seems to generally increase people’s knowledge of it, one paper, “Partisan Perceptual Bias and the Information Environment,” showed that when the coverage has implications for a person’s political party, then selective learning kicks into high gear.** “You can have very high levels of news coverage of a particular fact or an event and you see little or no learning among people who are motivated to disagree with that piece of information,” says Jennifer Jerit, a professor of political science at Stony Brook University and a co-author of the partisan-perception study. “Our results suggest that extraordinary levels of media coverage may be required for partisans to incorporate information that runs contrary to their political views,” the study reads. For example, Democrats are overwhelmingly supportive of bills to ban the chemical BPA from household products, even though the FDA and many scientific studies have found it is safe at the low levels currently used. This reflects a “chemophobia” often seen among liberals, according to Politico. Fact-checking erroneous statements made by politicians or cranks may also be ineffective. **Nyhan’s work has shown that correcting people’s misperceptions often doesn’t work, and worse, sometimes it creates a backfire effect, making people endorse their misperceptions even more strongly.** Sometimes during experimental studies in the lab, Jerit says, researchers have been able to fight against motivated reasoning by priming people to focus on accuracy in whatever task is at hand, but it’s unclear how to translate that to the real world, where people wear information like team jerseys. Especially because a lot of false political beliefs have to do with issues that don’t really affect people’s day-to-day lives. “Most people have no reason to have a position on climate change aside from expression of their identity,” Kahan says. “Their personal behavior isn’t going to affect the risk that they face. They don't matter enough as a voter to determine the outcome on policies or anything like this. These are just badges of membership in these groups, and that’s how most people process the information.” In 2016, Oxford Dictionaries chose “post-truth” as its word of the year, defined as “relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief.” It was a year when the winning presidential candidate lied almost constantly on the campaign trail, when fake news abounded, and when people cocooned themselves thoroughly in social-media spheres that only told them what they wanted to hear. After careening through a partisan hall of mirrors, the “facts” that came through were so twisted and warped that Democrats and Republicans alike were accused of living in a “filter bubble,” or an “echo chamber,” or even an “alternate reality.” Farhad Manjoo’s book, True Enough: Learning to Live in a Post-Fact Society, sounds like it could have come out yesterday—with its argument about how the media is fragmenting, how belief beats out fact, and how objective reality itself gets questioned—but it was actually published in 2008. “Around the time [the book] came out, I was a little bit unsure how speculative and how real the idea was,” says Manjoo, who is now a technology columnist for The New York Times. “One of my arguments was, in politics, you don’t pay a penalty for lying.” At the time, a lot of lies were going around about presidential candidate Barack Obama—that he was a Muslim, that he wasn’t born in the United States—lies that did not ultimately sink him. “Here was a person who was super rational, and believed in science, and was the target of these factless claims, but won anyway,” Manjoo says. “It really seemed like that election was a vindication of fact and truth, which in retrospect, I think it was just not.” There was plenty of post-truth to go around during the Obama administration, whether it was the birther rumors (famously perpetuated by the current president) that just wouldn’t die, or the debate over the nonexistent “death panels” in the Affordable Care Act. “I started to get a sense that my idea was probably realer than I thought,” Manjoo says. “And then you had the 2016 election, which confirmed every worst fear of mine.” But the problem, Nyhan says, with “post-truth, post-fact language is it suggests a kind of golden age that never existed in which political debate was based on facts and truth.” People have always been tribal and have always believed things that aren’t true. Is the present moment really so different, or do the stakes just feel higher? Partisanship has surely ramped up—but Americans have been partisan before, to the point of civil war. Today’s media environment is certainly unique, though it’s following some classic patterns. This is hardly the first time there have been partisan publications, or many competing outlets, or even information silos. People often despair at the loss of the mid-20th-century model, when just a few newspapers and TV channels fed people most of their unbiased news vegetables. But in the 19th century, papers were known for competing for eyeballs with sensational headlines, and in the time of the Founding Fathers, Federalist and Republican papers were constantly sniping at each other. In times when communication wasn’t as easy as it is now, news was more local—you could say people were in geographical information silos. The mid-20th-century “mainstream media” was an anomaly. The situation now is in some ways a return to the bad old days of bias and silos and competition, “but it’s like a supercharged return,” Manjoo says. “It’s not just that I’m reading news that confirms my beliefs, but I’m sharing it and friending other people, and that affects their media. I think it’s less important what a news story says than what your friend says about the news story.” These silos are also no longer geographical, but ideological and thus less diverse. A recent study in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences that analyzed 376 million Facebook users’ interactions with 900 news outlets reports that “selective exposure drives news consumption.” Not everyone, however, agrees that the silos exist. Kahan says he’s not convinced: “I think that people have a preference for the sources that support their position. That doesn’t mean that they're never encountering what the other side is saying.” They’re just dismissing it when they do. **The sheer scale of the internet allows you to find evidence (if sometimes dubious evidence) for any claim you want to believe, and counterevidence against any claim you don’t want to have to believe.** And because humans didn’t evolve to operate in such a large sea of people and information, Boyer says people can be fooled into thinking some ideas are more widespread than they really are. “When I was doing fieldwork in small villages in Africa, I've seen examples of people who have a strange belief,” he says. “[For example], they think that if they recite an incantation they can make a small object disappear. Now, most people around them just laugh and tell them that’s stupid. And that’s it. And the belief kind of disappears.” But as a community gets larger, the likelier it is that a person can find someone else who shares their strange belief. And if the “community” is everyone in the world with an internet connection who speaks your language, well. “If you encounter 10 people who seem to have roughly the same idea, then it fools your system into thinking that it must be a probable idea because lots of people agree with it,” Boyer says. “One thing you assume, unconsciously, is that these 10 people came to the same belief independently. You don’t think that nine of these are just repeating something that the 10th one said.” Part of the problem is that society has advanced to the point that believing what’s true often means accepting things you don’t have any firsthand experience of and that you may not completely understand. Sometimes it means disbelieving your own senses—Earth doesn’t feel like it’s moving, after all, and you can’t see climate change out your window. In areas where you lack expertise, you have to rely on trust. Even Clifford acknowledges this—it’s acceptable, he says, to believe what someone else tells you “when there is reasonable ground for supposing that he knows the matter of which he speaks.” The problem is that who and what people trust to give them reliable information is also tribal. Deferring to experts might seem like a good start, but Kahan has found that **people see experts who agree with them as more legitimate than experts who don’t**. In the United States, people are less generally trusting of each other than they used to be. Since 1972, the General Social Survey has asked respondents: “Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?” As of 2014, the most recent data, the number of people saying most others can be trusted was at a historic low. On the other hand, there’s “particularized trust”—specifically, the trust you have for people in your groups. “Particularized trust destroys generalized trust,” Manjoo wrote in his book. “The more that people trust those who are like themselves—the more they trust people in their own town, say—the more they distrust strangers.” This fuels tribalism. “Particularized trusters are likely to join groups composed of people like themselves—and to shy away from activities that involve people they don’t see as part of their moral community,” writes Eric Uslaner, a professor of government and politics at the University of Maryland, College Park. So people high on the particularized-trust scale would be more likely to believe information that comes from others in their groups, and if those groups are ideological, the people sharing that information probably already agree with them. And so it spirals. This is also a big part of why people don’t trust the media. Not that news articles are never biased, but a hypothetical perfectly evenhanded piece of journalism, that fairly and neutrally represented all sides would still likely be seen as biased by people on each side. Because, Manjoo writes, everyone thinks their side has the best evidence, and therefore if the article were truly objective, it would have emphasized their side more. This is the attitude Trump has taken toward the media, calling any unfavorable coverage of him—even if it’s true—“unfair” and “fake news.” On the other hand, outlets that are biased in his favor, like Fox and Friends and the pro-Trump conservative blog The Gateway Pundit, Trump bills as “very honorable” and he invites them to the White House. (This is a reversal of fortune for Fox, which got a similar “fake news” style brush-off in 2009, when Obama’s communications director said the administration wouldn’t “legitimize them as a news organization.”) Trump’s is an extreme, id-fueled version of particularized trust, to be sure, but it’s akin to a mind-set many are prone to. Objectivity is a valiant battle, but sometimes, a losing one. “Alternative facts” is a phrase that will live in infamy. Trump counselor Kellyanne Conway famously used it to describe White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer’s lie that Trump’s inauguration had drawn the “largest audience to ever witness an inauguration—period.” Spicer has also said to reporters, “I think sometimes we can disagree with the facts.” These are some of the more explicit statements from an administration that shows in ways subtle and not-at-all subtle that it often does not, as McIntyre would put it, “respect the truth.” This sort of flippant disregard for objective reality is deeply troubling, but the extreme nature of it also exposes more clearly something that’s always been true about politics: that sometimes when we argue about the facts, we’re not arguing about the facts at all. The experiment where Trump supporters were asked about the inauguration photos is one example. In a paper on political misperceptions, Nyhan suggests another: a survey asking people whether they agree with the statement “The murder rate in the United States is the highest it’s been in 45 years,” something Trump often said on the campaign trail, as well as something that’s not true. “Because the claim is false,” Nyhan writes, “the most accurate response is to disagree. But what does it mean if a person agrees with the statement?” It becomes unclear whether the person really believes that the false statement is true, or whether they’re using it as a shortcut to express something else—their support for Trump regardless of the validity of his claims, or just the fact that they feel unsafe and they’re worried about crime. Though for the media outlets that are fact-checking these things, it’s a matter of truth and falsehood, for the ordinary person evaluating, adopting, rejecting, or spreading false beliefs, that may not be what it’s really about. Sometimes when we argue about the facts, we’re not arguing about the facts at all. These are more often disputes over values, Kahan says, about what kind of society people want and which group or politician aligns with that. “Even if a fact is corrected, why is that going to make a difference?” he asks. “That’s not why they were supporting the person in the first place.” So what would get someone to change their mind about a false belief that is deeply tied to their identity? “Probably nothing,” Tavris says. “I mean that seriously.” But of course there are areas where facts can make a difference. There are people who are just mistaken or who are motivated to believe something false without treasuring the false belief like a crown jewel. “Personally my own theory is that there’s a slide that happens,” McIntyre says. “This is why we need to teach critical thinking, and this is why we need to push back against false beliefs, because there are some people who are still redeemable, who haven’t made that full slide into denialism yet. **I think once they’ve hit denial, they’re too far gone and there’s not a lot you can do to save them**.”

#### Journalistic objectivity has been used to silence black journalists and allows whiteness to determine what ‘truth’ is

Lowery 20 (Wesley Lowery is a journalist at CBS News, formerly at The Washington Post. He was a lead on the Post's "Fatal Force" project that won the Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting in 2016 as well as the author of They Can't Kill Us All: Ferguson, Baltimore, and a New Era in America's Racial Justice Movement.), “A Reckoning Over Objectivity, Led by Black Journalists”, The New York Times, 6-23-20, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/23/opinion/objectivity-black-journalists-coronavirus.html> NT

Since American journalism’s pivot many decades ago from an openly partisan press to a model of professed objectivity, **the mainstream has allowed what it considers objective truth to be decided almost exclusively by white reporters and their mostly white bosses.** And those selective truths have been calibrated to avoid offending the sensibilities of white readers. On opinion pages, the contours of acceptable public debate have largely been determined through the gaze of white editors. **The views and inclinations of whiteness are accepted as the objective neutral.** When black and brown reporters and editors challenge those conventions, it’s not uncommon for them to be pushed out, reprimanded or robbed of new opportunities. The journalist Alex S. Jones, who served as a longtime director of Harvard’s Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy, wrote in “Losing the News,” his 2009 book, “I define journalistic objectivity as a genuine effort to be an honest broker when it comes to news.” To him, “That means playing it straight without favoring one side when the facts are in dispute, regardless of your own views and preferences.” But objectivity, Mr. Jones wrote, “also means not trying to create the illusion of fairness by letting advocates pretend in your journalism that there is a debate about the facts when the weight of truth is clear.” He critiqued “he-said/she-said reporting, which just pits one voice against another,” as “the discredited face of objectivity. But that is not authentic objectivity.” It’s striking to read objectivity defined that way — not because it’s objectionable, but rather because it barely resembles the way the concept is commonly discussed in newsrooms today. Conversations about objectivity, rather than happening in a virtuous vacuum, habitually focus on predicting whether a given sentence, opening paragraph or entire article **will appear objective to a theoretical reader, who is invariably assumed to be white**. This creates the very illusion of fairness that Mr. Jones, and others, specifically warn against. Instead of telling hard truths in this polarized environment, America’s newsrooms too often deprive their readers of plainly stated facts that could expose reporters to accusations of partiality or imbalance. For years, I’ve been among a chorus of mainstream journalists who have called for our industry to abandon the appearance of objectivity as the aspirational journalistic standard, and for reporters instead to focus on being fair and telling the truth, as best as one can, based on the given context and available facts. It’s not a novel argument. Scores of journalists across generations, from gonzo reporters like Hunter S. Thompson to more traditional voices like Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, have advocated this very approach. Mr. Kovach and Mr. Rosenstiel lay it out in detail in their classic text “The Elements of Journalism.” Those of us advancing this argument know that a fairness-and-truth focus will have different, healthy interpretations. We also know that neutral “objective journalism” is constructed atop a pyramid of subjective decision-making: which stories to cover, how intensely to cover those stories, which sources to seek out and include, which pieces of information are highlighted and which are downplayed. **No journalistic process is objective**. And no individual journalist is objective, because no human being is. And so, instead of promising our readers that we will never, on any platform, betray a single personal bias — submitting ourselves to a life sentence of public thoughtlessness — a better pledge would be an assurance that we will devote ourselves to accuracy, that we will diligently seek out the perspectives of those with whom we personally may be inclined to disagree and that we will be just as sure to ask hard questions of those with whom we’re inclined to agree. The best of our profession already does this. But we need to be honest about the gulf that lies between the best and the bulk.