Aff: In a democracy, a free press ought to prioritize **objectivity** over advocacy.

TW: discussion of hate crime, xenophobia, and hate speech. There is no graphic detail nor discrimation, just a discussion of it, and its role in harming communities and society

Observation; While this resolution is specific to democracies, it is important to understand that as NSDA, and this tournament, is US based. To that metric, while carding and examples can be seen as key to international affairs, their key focus for this case should be the harms of nonobjectivity in the free press, specifically within the United States Of America.

Framework: Deplatforming Hate-. It is our ethical duty, as people, to reject hate, and foster tolerance and equity. Hate is a festering, pervasive entity within our world. However, in an ever connected, ever reported world, ideas spread quicker than ever before. “Constantly emphasizing inherently the violent, antidemocratic, and racist nature of white nationalist ideas can be an effective way of discrediting those who promote these ideologies” [Clark, 2020](https://www.americanprogress.org/article/white-supremacy-returned-mainstream-politics/) In order to emphasize ethicality within this space, and within our ever connected world, the case that best deplatforms hate by emphasizing its pervasive nature and its position in society ought to win the round.

Contention 1: Democracy harmed by Hate

Democracy cannot exist as an instrument to the people when the very people it seeks to protect and represent are harmed. The FBI reports that last year they saw over a 6% overall rise in reported bias incidents, and details a rise in hateful rhetoric in opinion based posts and articles. The spread of such ideas is dangerous to society-

NYT says the following in its consideration of Legal Scholar Jermey Wladron book: The Hate of Hate Speech-

Waldron begins with the premise that in a “well-ordered society” not only must all people be protected by the law; they are entitled to live in confidence of this protection. “Each person . . . should be able to go about his or her business, with the assurance that there will be no need to face hostility, violence, discrimination or exclusion by others.” Hate speech undermines this essential public good. “When a society is defaced with anti-Semitic signage, burning crosses and defamatory racial leaflets,” Waldron says, this assurance of security “evaporates. A vigilant police force and a Justice Department may still keep people from being attacked or excluded,” but the objects of hate speech are deprived of the assurance that the society regards them as people of equal dignity.

Even when the hate speech comes from isolated fringe elements, themselves despised by a majority of the public, Waldron tells us, we should not regard the harm as insignificant. “Precisely because the public good that is under attack is provided in a general, diffuse and implicit way,” he explains, “the flare-up of a few particular incidents can have a disproportionate ­effect.”

Indeed, it cannot be overstated the harm it does for a cultural conscious for hateful ideals to be allowed to spread.

Contention 2: Hate is advocated by the free press

As much as we like to obfuscate its harms, advocacy is defined by Merrium-Webster as ‘the act and process of supporting a cause or proposal’. It states nothing of the content of such causes. As much as we like to pretend advocacy is seeking platform for the marginalized, advocacy in the press in its modern interpretation has led to the growth of the far-right, and thus, hate-

The Wrap Reported the Following in 2021:

“Former Neo-Nazi recruiter Frank Meeink says that Fox News has radicalized millions of Americans towards right-wing extremism, comparing the rhetoric on the cable news network to the language and propaganda that aired during the Rwandan civil war and genocide in the 1990s.

“Fox News has completely radicalized so many Americans,” Meeink told CNN’s Pamela Brown on Saturday. “If you look at Fox News and then you compare that to hate radio from Rwanda, and what started that civil war, there’s comparisons there. We have to know that a lot of our fellow Americans, our fellow children of God, have been radicalized by a network of news.”

Since 2002, Fox News has been the most viewed news cable show, with over 87 million homes revealing its telecasts. Institutions like Fox News, prolific members of the free press, utilize their position and resources to advocate for xenophobia and intolerance.

**Ending media objectivity requirements spawned the Alt-Right and reinvigorated white nationalism**

**Cagliuso 21** [Dominique Cagliuso, writer with working on a Master in International Affairs with a concentration in Human Rights and a Specialization in UN Studies at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs, 2021, “Age of the Alt-Right: New-Age Media and White Nationalism in Trump’s America,” International Social Science Review, https://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1529&context=issr]/Kankee

The New-Age of Media Since the turn of the millennium, both social and technological advancements have allowed the white supremacy movement to flourish. Through the use of the internet, they have been able to spread their ideology to millions. While the ideas and beliefs behind the Alt-Right movement are nothing new, the dissemination of their ideas through the internet is. A Senior Fellow at the Southern Poverty Law Center, Mark Potok, stated that the data they were collecting led them to conclude that “the advent of social media and other more dispersed means of sharing information had created a shift in how **extremists** shared their ideologies and how they recruited, too.”11 The SPLC maintains that most **white supremacists** today are no longer members of official groups but rather operate over the internet. The origins of the far-right's internet use can be traced back to the creation of the platform Stormfront. This white supremacist platform was created in 1990 as a virtual bulletin board for the Senate campaign of David Duke, a former Grand Wizard of the KKK. Eventually, the website went public in 1995 and became the stormfront.com that is still active today.12 Due to the creation of stormfront.com, around several hundred white supremacists were turning to the internet by 2000.13 In 2004, Robert Futrell and Pete Simi attributed the white power movement's success to the newly developed "free spaces" on the internet. These "free spaces" were defined as "network intersections that link otherwise isolated activist networks through physical and virtual spaces."14 Futrell and Simi concluded that the use of cyberspace would **massively** affect the white power movement by creating a new and easier platform to find existing members and to seek out potential recruits. With the creation of new platforms and websites gaining traction, the traditional magazine American Renaissance converted their publishings to the internet. After a decade of shipping out the original magazine, in 2000, they added a virtual magazine for their readers. By 2012, they ceased all shipments of the magazine and transitioned entirely to an online presence. The editor of American Renaissance, Jared Taylor, wrote to their subscribers about the decision to go virtual: Dear Subscriber; We will be shifting our efforts from the monthly publication into what we expect to be the very best race-realist website on the internet… We have seen the costs of printing and mailing continue to rise while, at the same time, more and more people look to the internet for information. When we began publishing in November 1990, it was tough to get unorthodox information about race. The only way to find out about them was through luck, word of mouth, or diligent library research… There was only a meager network of racially conscious whites who rarely met each other. The internet has given rise to scores of racially conscious websites, and it has become easy to find like-minded people. 15 In the twentieth century, news organizations tried to present information in an unbiased and **objective** way. Bias was meant to be avoided **at all costs**, and facts were supposed to be highly proven with evidence. In 1949, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) enacted the **F**airness **D**octrine with the purpose of enforcing strict rules on broadcast media. The doctrine required any entity functioning under a broadcasting license needed to present **unbiased** news and cover **all sides** of an issue. Under these rules, the media was **rewarded** by presenting truthful, unbiased, and fair reports. **Everything** **changed**, though, when the **F**airness **D**octrine was repealed in 1987.16 The new media era began with the founding of FOX News in October1996.17 The network purpose was to showcase **solely** Republican and Conservative ideas and news. This creation of **biased** news networks **quickly** led to the "**narrowcasting**" seen today: where producers of news seek to gain readers **for profit** rather than share **credible** and unbiased news. They seek to **reinforce** the readers’ already **existing viewpoints** rather than inform them of all sides. The new media also rewards the **speed** of news **rather than accuracy**. It is seen as more important to be the first to report on a topic whether or not the content is yet proven as true or false. 18 The rise of the internet created a new medium for political discourse and gave birth to the Alt-Right movement. As it became more challenging for those with a racial bias to openly voice their opinions without persecution, the internet opened an entirely new platform for supremacists to express their ideology without social reproach. The Alt-Right success can be attributed to the internet’s lack of “opportunity costs—the energy, money, and psychological energy it takes to meet people, establish connections, and mobilize actions among groups of people.”19 By anonymously joining a movement for free by merely owning an internet-accessible device, the Alt-Right became the new haven for white nationalists. An expansive network of right-wing platforms has been created during this new digital era. A few of the most successful far-right websites that the Alt-Right frequent are Breitbart, Infowars, 4chan, American Renaissance, and Occidental Dissent. Social media sites such as Twitter, Reddit, and Facebook have also played **vital roles** in the movement’s growth—although there have been increased monitoring of hate groups on these sites in the past few years. Andrew Anglin created The Daily Stormer in 2013, one of the most well-known Alt-Right sites. It focuses on the sense of victimhood and marginalization that the Alt-Right strongly believes they are the subject of.20 Another significant Alt-Right player, Alex Jones's Infowars, is known as the conspiracymongering site at the center of many Alt-Right ideologies and conspiracy theories.21 Infowars is used to “fuel right-wing paranoia and **propaganda**.”22 Infowars truly emphasizes the concept of the “**false flag**,” used as a claim that anything potentially damaging to conservative values must simply be false. It is the concept that anything that has gone wrong, whether it be a scandal, a mass shooting, or an economic crisis, must be the fault of liberal policies or a plot by liberal players to undermine the conservatives.23 Without a doubt, the most prominent way that the AltRight represents themselves in our society today is through the internet. The Ideology of the Alt-Right

It cannot be ignored that mainstream sources have overlooked the ethical duty to be good people and not promote villainous, wicked, and heinous ideas.

#### **A post-truth focus on alternative facts causes a US decline to fascism and the death of democracy – objectivity in journalism is the only check against American Nazism**

**Palley 21** [Thomas Palley, US economist with a master's degree in international relations and a PhD in economics from Yale University, and former chief economist for the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2021, “Proto-Fascism Unleashed: How the Republican Party Sold its Soul and now Threatens Democracy,” Political Economy Research Institute, https://peri.umass.edu/publication/item/1460-fascism-unleashed-how-the-republican-party-sold-its-soul-and-now-threatens-democracy]/Kankee

Her offenses were twofold. First, denying Donald Trump’s dishonest claim to have won the November 2020 election. Second, voting for Trump’s impeachment for his role in promoting the insurrection of January 6, 2021. Cheney’s dismissal marks another step for the U.S. down the road to **fascism**, and the **echoes** with the Germany’s **Nazi** experience grow louder every day. (...) fake news. The phenomenon of fake news is associated with the internet and new communication and social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook. It rose to prominence after the 2016 election when Hillary Clinton and the Democrats tried to deflect blame for their defeat on to Russian internet trolls who had posted fake news stories that had supposedly swung the election. The phenomenon was even larger in the 2020 election, but now the fake news stories were associated with home-grown right-wing extremist groups. The problem of internet fake news is real. The internet provides a platform for rapid far-reaching dissemination of highly **tendentious** or outright **fake** material, which can be **plausibly** presented in ways that make it **difficult to detect**. As such, the internet and social media have become the whipping boy for fake news. However, that storyline is a form of fake news in itself. First, it misses the story of Fox News which is broadcast by the enormously influential “old technology” Fox TV network. Second, it miss- es the story of why so many Americans have **rejected** traditional news sources, why they have such an appetite for fake news, and why they are so vulnerable to fake news. Those questions compel recognition that fake news did not emerge from a vacuum. Instead, it emerged from an environment in which many viewers had been primed to receive **partisan** one-sided news presentations, and where they had lost both the **capacity** to check and the **desire** for checked news. Fox News is a **critical** part of that story in two ways. First, it contributed to the prepping and transformation of the Republican base into what it has become. Second, it points to the original sin which birthed the conditions enabling a player like Fox News to become dominant. Metaphorically speaking, Fox News is the bridge that connects where we are now with where we came from, and it also illuminates how we got here. As regards the prepping and transformation of the Republican base, Fox News has skillfully and entertainingly fostered **extremism** in the base for over **twenty-five** **years**. The founding CEO was Roger Aisles, a former Republican media consultant and CNBC executive. Aisles set the tone and direction of the network which has been built on favorable reporting of conservative causes and the Republican party, combined with **persistent** **denigration** of the Democratic Party and liberal causes. It has supported the **incremental** takeover of the Republican Party by its more extreme elements, while simultaneously encouraging its viewership to become more **extreme** and **hostile** to the Democratic Party. Leading Fox News personalities include Lou Dobbs, Sean Hannity, and Tucker Carlson, all of whom are widely recognized to be aligned with what used to be the extreme wing of the Republican Party. Fox has been enormously successful, ranking as the top-rated cable news network in 2019 and received by 87 million U.S. households (90 percent of television subscribers). Its viewer demographic leans significantly older, and a 2013 Gallup poll reported 94 percent of Fox News viewers either identified with or leaned toward the Republican Party. Academic studies uniformly agree that it has an extreme pro-Republican bias, and exposure to Fox News increases the Republican vote share. Some go so far as to characterize it as an **extension of the Republican Party**, delivering news that borders on agitprop (agitation **propaganda**).1 The bottom line is that Fox News has played a critical role transforming the news and political reporting culture, and prepping Americans to be receptive and welcoming of extremist fake news. In effect, it prepared the ground in which internet based fake news could seed so easily. But just as fake news did not develop in a vacuum, so too Fox News did not develop in a vacuum. That leads to the other side of the bridge and the original sin that birthed today’s conditions. The **decisive measure** was the Federal Communication Commission’s (FCC) **elimination** of the “**F**airness **D**octrine” in 1987. The doctrine had been introduced in 1949. It required holders of broadcasting licenses to present controversial issues of public importance and to do so in a manner that was, honest, equitable, and balanced. In short, it was a **restraint** on exactly the **corrosive** type of news and political reporting that Fox News introduced, and which opened the ugly **Pandora’s box** of fake news. The attack on the Fairness Doctrine was led by conservative libertarian and business interests. Business viewed it as an expense and a restraint on lucrative commercial possibilities offered by the infotainment market, in which news is twisted into entertaining partisan half-truths and opinions are presented as fact. Both business and libertarians sold their attack on First Amendment grounds (i.e. unconstitutional restriction of speech), and on grounds that market developments meant consumers had a multitude of news possibilities against which they could check for truth. The doctrine’s elimination unleashed a **demon** that has only gotten worse over time. Fox News was the beginning of the journey: fake news was the destination. And the same arguments that justified repeal of the Fairness Doctrine now service the cause of fake news. “Truth” is impossible. That is because we are always dogged by our own subjectivity, and there are also deep epistemological limits to knowing. However, if truth is impossible, we can still aspire to it via a culture and institutions that promote “truth telling”. The Fairness Doctrine sought to do that in its own imperfect way. It sought to combine freedom with the obligation to **restrain subjectivity** via **equitable** **balanced** reporting. The Republican Party of Ronald Reagan (i.e. the old guard) tore down that structure, using libertarian myths about what people are capable of and simultaneously denying their limitations. In denying those limitations they have ended up jeopardizing liberty. The corrosive effect is visible in the practices of Fox News and fake news, but the damage goes far deeper. The Republican old guard loved to bleat about liberal relativism as part of the “red meat” diet it fed its political base. Liberal relativism is a philosophical discourse that recognizes the inescapable presence of subjectivity and limits to knowing. However, liberals then pair it with pluralist practice that uses reason and rules of evidence as a way of restraining the nihilistic aspects of relativism. At the individual level, the liberal also tacitly embraces existentialism, whereby the individual begins by acknowledging she is responsible for her existence (i.e. for her own life). That frame puts the individual at center stage in a context in which freedom can flourish. Republicans, under the guise of libertarianism, have done the exact opposite. Rather than recognize the reality of relativism, they have pedaled absolutism. The simplicity of absolutism sells well politically, but it does not void the reality of the problems (subjectivity and limits to knowing) identified by relativism. Instead, it covers over the problems and promotes conflict. With absolutism, each person’s truth can claim to be “the truth”, leaving society at loggerheads. The only resolution of that impasse is the **force of will**, which Nietzsche embodied metaphorically in his construct of the “uberman”. The truth that prevails is whatever the most powerful will asserts it to be. Fake news is truth if it is allowed by the prevailing will, and so too is the Big Lie. In sum, the Republican Party old guard’s vilification of relativism, assertion of absolutism, and destruction of a culture of aspiration to truth telling are the original sin that birthed the order in which fake news and the Big Lie can claim to be truth. That new order betrays the past and threatens the future. Now, it is force of will that will determine whether the Big Lie prevails or a culture of truth telling is restored. 6. A greater purpose above the law

Advocacy based journalism for the sake of profit has driven up far-right paranoia, and action. It’s not just Fox News, its creatures like it who spread, report, and advocate for disgusting rhetoric. We should fear, as ethical people, their continued influence. So, how do we reclaim the means of information consumption, free from advocate voices calling for damnable measures? Objectivity.

Contention 3: Objectivity Aids

Objectivity, or the push to report facts without bias or political intent, is essential to preventing fear-mongering, facsist fodder. Prioritizing advocacy in media has led to a rise in the far-right, but things like the Fairness Doctrine assured that issues of key importance were done with a air of objectivity. Objectivity offers a way of gleaning info without a potentially harmful framing-

‘What I'd suggest is that we draw on the tremendous public sentiment against hate, against the spread of disinformation, against the spread of algorithmic discrimination and take this opportunity in the next couple of years to push a regime, a regulatory regime that addresses the harms of that business model so that we have better competition on the internet, so that we have better privacy, so that we can have better transparency and to the ways that these algorithms work.’- [Harvard School of Public Health, 2019](https://theforum.sph.harvard.edu/events/the-spread-of-hate-and-racism/)

A rejection of advocacy based journalism best upholds democratic principles, and an emphasis on objectivity aids in such an endeavor.