## NC – BVN - Round 1

### Overview

#### Because objectivity’s insistence on playing “both sides” pits the truth and lies together on equal footing, I negate Resolved: In a democracy, a free press ought to prioritize objectivity over advocacy

### Definitions

#### In order to understand what it means for me to negate, we need to define a few key words in the resolution.

#### First, Oxford Languages defines “advocacy” as “public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy” (<https://www.google.com/search?q=advocacy+definition&oq=advocacy+d&aqs=chrome.0.35i39j69i57j0i512l3j0i20i263i512j0i512l4.2957j1j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>)

#### This means a press that prioritizes advocacy publishes persuasive material

#### Second, the Online News Association defines “objectivity” in the context of journalism as

Online News Association No Date (“Balance and Fairness” Written primarily by Alan D. Abbey.)

https://ethics.journalists.org/topics/balance-and-fairness/

Balance and fairness are classic buzzwords of journalism ethics: In objective journalism, stories must be balanced in the sense of attempting to present all sides of a story. Fairness means that a journalist should strive for accuracy and truth in reporting, and not slant a story so a reader draws the reporter’s desired conclusion.

#### This means objective journalism is not just a list of facts – objective journalism is sharing all viewpoints on an issue

#### Finally, Britannica defines “prioritize” as “to make (something) the most important thing in a group” (<https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/prioritize>)

#### This means to prioritize objectivity is to make it the central goal of journalism

#### With that out of the way, let’s look at how to determine what this round should center around.

### Value/Value Criterion

#### The value, or how to decide what the center is, is life – is must be the value because keeping someone alive is intrinsically good, materially measurable, and a precondition to all other moral questions

#### The value criterion, or how you evaluate who best achieves the value of life, is reverse utilitarianism, which means attempting to achieve the minimum amount of suffering. This is measurable and prioritizes the greatest good, but also ensures that nobody is left behind, making it the best way to access the value of life

#### With that out of the way, let’s get into why an objective press best achieves the value of life

### Contention: False Equivalency

#### The thesis of this argument is that objective reporting’s insistence on putting “both sides” of arguments undermines the truth. In issues like climate change, this compromises effectiveness of policy actions, leaving runaway climate change to risk extinction. Let’s look at each part of this argument in more detail:

#### Arbitrarily including contrarian opinion for the sake of balance causes climate change denialism

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

22 1. Introduction 23 While scientific consensus on anthropogenic climate change has been growing in recent 24 decades (Anderegg et al., 2010; Cook et al., 2013; Oreskes, 2004), public opinion has also become 25 increasingly uncertain about the urgency of climate change as a problem (Patt and Weber, 2014; 26 Ratter et al., 2012). Citizens of the biggest carbon emitters of the world (the United States and China) 27 are even less concerned about climate change than people from other countries (PEW, 2015). 28 Outright denial of climate change persists among salient minorities in the United States, United 29 Kingdom, and Australia, and in small niche publics in other countries (Capstick and Pidgeon, 2014; 30 European Commission, 2014; Leiserowitz et al., 2013, 2013; Whitmarsh, 2011). One reason for this 31 entrenched denialism in public opinion may be the way the media portray the scientific consensus on 32 climate change as represented by the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 33 (IPCC). By providing a forum for contrarian views, the media “perpetuate the myth of a lack of 34 international scientific consensus on anthropogenic climate change—and thereby succeed in 35 maintaining public confusion” (Antilla, 2005: 350). Various studies have shown the detrimental 36 effects of ‘balanced’ media coverage that depict climate change as an open debate between 37 ‘skeptics’ and ‘warners’ (with regards to public debates about vaccines, see: Dixon and Clarke, 2013; 38 Lewandowsky et al., 2013). Thus, the study of media content and its influencing factors is not only 39 relevant for scholars of journalism, but also for everyone seeking to understand how societies 40 struggle to deal with the challenge of climate change. 41 Our study tackles this challenge by analyzing how the IPCC stance on climate change and its 42 challengers are covered in different journalistic media. We seek to explain different patterns of 43 media content by taking into account the influence of different editorial and national contexts. The 44 study contributes to our understanding of how and why contrarian views remain salient in media 45 debates. It is based on a content analysis of articles (N = 936) published in four different types of 46 leading news outlets (left-leaning, right-leaning, regional, online) in five countries (Germany, India, 47 Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States), and is complemented by a survey of the authors of 48 these articles. We argue that a common explanation for the presence of climate change denial in 49 media coverage – adherence to the journalistic norm of balance (Boykoff and Boykoff, 2004) – can no 50 longer be regarded as the most powerful driver of climate coverage. Instead we find a transnational 51 pattern of interpretive journalism that puts the denial of anthropogenic climate change into context. 52 2. Analytical framework and state of research: journalists’ role in the climate debate 53 To assess how journalists report on climate change and how they deal with its denial, it is 54 first necessary to describe what we call the climate change frame or IPCC view, as well as the 55 contrarian voices in public debates. The climate change frame or consensus as presented in IPCC 56 reports and in scientific journals may be summarized in four statements (Brüggemann and Engesser, 57 2014; Shehata and Hopmann, 2012): (1) Global warming represents an extraordinary rise in average 58 global temperatures since the industrial revolution. (2) It is mainly caused by human-induced 59 emissions of CO2 and other greenhouse gases. (3) It creates problems for both ecosystems and 60 humanity. (4) Emissions need to be reduced to avoid future damage. These statements allow us to 61 identify four types of contrarianism or challenges to the climate change frame; they focus on 62 doubting: the trend (climate change), the attribution (anthropogenic), the impact (risks, severe 63 problems), and the treatment (reducing emissions) (see Rahmstorf (2004) for the first three types of 64 contrarianism). This framework does not capture all variants of contrarian claims (Capstick and 65 Pidgeon, 2014); it focuses on the challenges that attack the core of the consensus among the world’s 66 leading climate scientists.67 We call actors who challenge the climate change frame in public debates ‘contrarians’ rather 68 than ‘skeptics’ or ‘deniers,’ following a suggestion by McCright (2007) and O’Neill and Boykoff (2010). 69 There are few climate scientists among the contrarians; the group is comprised of people from 70 different backgrounds, many of whom are closely connected to professional lobbyists and the ‘denial 71 machine’ (Dunlap and McCright, 2011) – i.e., their professional activities are part of a strategy to 72 prevent pro-active climate policy-making (Boussalis and Coan, 2016). Contrarians as visible speakers 73 in public debates need to be distinguished from both individual citizens who may have doubts about 74 climate change and from actors who challenge more specific claims in the climate debate that are 75 not part of the basic consensus outlined above. 76 The journalistic practices of (1) giving disproportionate voice to contrarians and (2) 77 challenging the climate change consensus will be the focus of our study. The two practices are 78 interrelated but do not necessarily go together as the empirical analysis will show. First, we will 79 briefly sketch a conceptual framework of important factors that shape media content. Three levels of 80 influence can be distinguished: individual (journalist), organizational (newsroom), and external (e.g. 81 social institutions and culture) (cf. Shoemaker and Reese, 2014). In different contexts, the 82 ‘discretionary power’ (Semetko et al., 1991) of individual journalists varies: They are provided with 83 more or less leverage to set the frames of their coverage (Brüggemann, 2014). On all three levels of 84 influence, two main forces leave their imprint on media coverage: ideological biases and structural 85 media logics (Schulz, 2011: 68). Biases are preferences or inclinations to treat a topic in a certain way 86 (Lee and Grimmer, 2008) that stem from individual journalists, editors, external actors, and the wider 87 cultural context. ‘Media logic(s)’ include the professional norms and routines of journalists and 88 newsrooms, which Altheide (2004, p. 294) defines as “assumptions and processes for constructing 89 messages within a particular medium.” The most powerful media logics are news factors such as 90 novelty, elite actors, or proximity: editors look for these attributes when deciding which stories to 91 run, and journalists emphasize them in their coverage (Galtung and Ruge, 1965). 92 Past studies have found evidence that the power of bias and media logics at different levels 93 of influence explains the role of contrarians in climate coverage. Depending on ideological bias, 94 climate change is depicted as more or less uncertain, and climate policy is described as more or less 95 costly, depending on the policies of the respective national government (Grundmann, 2007). Below 96 the national level that introduces this kind of political/cultural bias, newsroom policies affect climate 97 coverage; right-leaning media are more likely to cite contrarian views (Carvalho, 2007; Feldman et 98 al., 2015; Feldman et al., 2011). There is also evidence that the ideological stance of the individual 99 author matters: right-wing columnists in the United States cultivate hard-core denialism of climate 100 change in their columns (Elsasser and Dunlap, 2013). Hence, different interpretations of climate 101 change, which are often strongly related to political ideology, influence the coverage of this issue. 102 Explanations drawing on media logics – particularly the professional norms of journalism – 103 are strongly connected to the work of Boykoff and Boykoff (2004) who emphasize the professional 104 norm of balance as an important influencing factor: "[...] journalists present competing points of 105 views on a scientific question as though they had equal scientific weight, when actually they do not’’ 106 (127). The norm of balance is part of the broader concept of objectivity (Westerstahl, 1983), which 107 calls on journalists to provide a ‘neutral’ account by giving equal voice to both sides in a conflict 108 (Hopmann et al., 2012). Journalists follow this practice as it allows them to demonstrate their 109 professional objectivity and to fend off accusations of one-sided coverage (Gans, 1979; Tuchman, 110 1972). Balance also serves as a "surrogate for validity checks" (Dunwoody and Peters, 1992: 129) if 111 journalists lack the time or expertise to assess the validity of conflicting statements from different 112 sources. Earlier research on environmental and science journalists in the United States cited evidence 113 of their lack of knowledge about what climate experts consider to be basic common in climate 114 research (Wilson, 2000). The norm of balance is particularly powerful in cases of contested 115 knowledge claims and a lack of expertise among the journalists who cover the respective issue. 116 Finally, conflicts create news value and thus stories that grasp audience attention. The presence of 117 contrarians in media coverage may therefore be explained by either bias (ideological fit) as outlined 118 above or as part of journalistic norms (objectivity/balance) and routines (news values). Yet applying 119 the norm of balance amplifies the views of contrarians (which may attract audience attention) and 120 distorts coverage of the issue. By quoting contrarian voices out of context, journalists give them 121 legitimacy and ‘media standing’ that might also translate into political power (Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 122 1993). 123 Boykoff and Boykoff (2004) examined the coverage of climate change in US newspapers from 124 1988 to 2002, and found that half of the articles presented a balanced account of the issue; slightly 125 more than half of the television newscasts analyzed during that time did so (Boykoff, 2008). A 126 replication of the study found the share of balanced coverage reduced from more than a third of all 127 articles in 2003 to about three percent in 2006 in US newspapers (Boykoff, 2007). Thus, balanced 128 reporting may be retreating, but contrarians have not necessarily vanished from the media. Painter 129 and Gavin (2016) find that the British press quoted contrarians in every fifth article during the years 130 2007 to 2011. Schmid-Petri et al. (2015) find that almost a third of articles in the US press contain 131 contrarian voices. Have journalists therefore moved on to a one-sided promotion of denial of climate 132 change, which would be proof of ideological bias, rather than adhere to professional logics such as 133 the norm of balanced coverage? 134 A recent survey of journalists covering climate change in different countries found that most 135 of them strongly agreed with the climate change consensus (Brüggemann and Engesser, 2014). 136 Therefore, it seems that they quote contrarians despite being aware that their claims defy the 137 findings of climate science. A much earlier US study identified a journalistic tendency to amplify 138 outlier views and give ‘mavericks’ a forum: Dearing (1995) analyzed US newspaper coverage of three 139 maverick science stories (e.g., propagating an alternative theory on the cause of AIDS). Our study 140 follows his model of analyzing the content of coverage and then conducting a survey of the authors 141 of the articles. Dearing found that the surveyed journalists were aware that the ‘maverick scientists’ 142 did not represent credible science, yet the articles’ neutral coverage of their views gave the 143 mavericks credibility. Dearing explained this with news values such as conflict that attract larger 144 audiences as well as a general sympathy for mavericks in US public culture, which values 145 individualism expressed through outlier views (also see Gans (1979)). 146 Another trend in journalism should be considered for making sense of the finding that 147 balanced coverage may be gone, but not so, the quoting of contrarian voices. Studies find a trend 148 towards interpretive reporting among online science journalists (Fahy and Nisbet, 2011) and in 149 political journalism in different Western countries (Esser and Umbricht, 2014). Hiles and Hinnant 150 (2014) found a radically redefined understanding of objectivity among experienced climate 151 journalists that goes beyond ‘balanced coverage.’ They found that while these specialist journalists 152 still attempted to refrain from letting their biases influence their coverage, they followed “weight-of153 evidence reporting” (Dunwoody, 2005) in which stories reflect scientific consensus and are “written 154 with authority” (Hiles and Hinnant, 2014: 15), thereby distinguishing between views that represent 155 valid, peer-reviewed science and those that represent outliers with no backing from scientific 156 evidence or peers (Boykoff, 2011). Another qualitative interview study with science journalists in the 157 United States confirms this trend: journalists claim that they want to go “beyond balance” and even 158 ignore contrarian voices (Gibson et al., 2016). 159 Yet, whether these approaches are put into practice has not been comprehensively 160 investigated with regards to different media types in different cultural contexts. Most studies focus 161 on the US and British contexts or on the coverage of upmarket newspapers (Schäfer and Schlichting, 162 2014). Grundmann and Scott (2014) also include France and Germany from 2000 to 2010 and a great 163 number of newspapers using corpus linguistic methods. Their study shows that, overall, contrarians 164 are much less prominent in media discourses than speakers who support the climate change 165 consensus. They also show that countries consistently diverge on the salience of contrarians, with a 166 much stronger entrenchment of contrarian voices in the United States. This is in line with findings 167 from Painter and Ashe (2012), who also included quality papers from Brazil, China, France, and India 168 in their analysis. They compared the coverage in 2007 and 2009/2010 during the UN Climate summit 169 in Copenhagen and, at the same time, ‘Climategate’ (the pseudo scandal constructed around 170 personal e-mails between climate researchers that were published by contrarian bloggers in order to 171 discredit climate research, Holliman (2011)). Overall, these findings show that there is no linear 172 decline in contrarianism in the news, but rather that specific events (or staged pseudo events like 173 Climategate) provide ‘media opportunity structures’ (Adam et al., 2003) for contrarians to become 174 salient voices in media coverage. This explains why Shehata and Hopmann (2012), who focused on 175 media coverage between 1997 and 2007, did not find contrarians in the news. They studied UN 176 climate conferences, where contrarians have not managed to play a significant political role. This was 177 radically different in the context of the Climategate campaign: the content analysis of Painter and 178 Ashe (2012) found that contrarian views occurred in every third article in the United States, followed 179 by the United Kingdom, while contrarians played only a negligible role in all other countries. 180 Painter and Ashe also found that roughly the same number of articles raised doubts about 181 climate change in right-leaning and left-leaning papers. The only difference was that right-leaning 182 papers hosted contrarianism in their commentary pages, while these sources were quoted in the left183 leaning newspapers. This confirms the influence of editorial bias on climate coverage: in right-leaning 184 papers, it is part of the editorial opinion; in left-leaning papers, contrarianism is raised by external 185 voices. Thus, past research has identified the salience of contrarianism and the evaluation of 186 contrarians as an important case for studying the influence of both ideological biases (along the left187 right spectrum) and journalistic norms (e.g., balance, news values). While the studies mentioned 188 above have pushed the research in this area ahead, there are three main gaps in the literature. 189 The first concerns the role of contrarianism in post-Climategate coverage, after 2010. 190 Climategate was an extraordinary moment of success of political spin, but it remains to be seen 191 whether climate change denial retained a voice in transnational journalism afterwards. Grundmann 192 and Stock (2014) extended their analysis to 2010 and show that after the peak of attention to 193 contrarians, the levels declined, but remained somewhat higher than during earlier times. In Britain, 194 the level of contrarianism in media coverage remained high in 2011 (Painter and Gavin, 2016). 195 Second, Painter and Ashe’s finding that contrarians were equally prominent in right- and left196 leaning papers raises the question whether (and how) these quotes were evaluated in the coverage. 197 For example, it is not clear whether contrarians were mentioned in the context of how they continue 198 to make unsubstantiated claims with no backing in climate science, whether they were balanced with 199 other voices (as originally posited in the Boykoff and Boykoff study from 2004), or whether 200 unbalanced contrarianism is occurring (as Painter and Gavin (2016) show for parts of the right201 leaning press in Britain). In this regard, the study by Grundmann and Stock (2012) provides a first 202 hint, as the term Climategate in their co-location analysis linked with the terms ‘stolen’ and ‘hacked’ 203 in the US media, while the British media preferred ‘leaked,’ which indicates that journalists in 204 different countries framed Climategate quite differently. This shows that analysis of the frequency of 205 reporting contrarian viewpoints needs to also include whether and how they were evaluated in the 206 articles. 207 Third, it is unclear whether the quoting of contrarians is motivated by media logic through 208 adherence to journalistic norms (such as balance or news values) or by ideological biases (such as 209 genuine questioning of the validity of climate science). This can best be explored by connecting 210 content analysis data with survey data (following the model introduced in Dearing (1995)).

#### A disproportionate contrarian presence in news compared to the scientific consensus on climate change prevents further climate action

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

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

#### This is important, because unchecked climate change leads to extinction.

**As David Spratt writes in 2019,** (David Spratt and Ian Dunlop, \*Research Director for Breakthrough National Centre for Climate Restoration and co-author of *Climate Code Red: The case for emergency action*; \*\*member of the Club of Rome AND formerly an international oil, gas and coal industry executive, chairman of the Australian Coal Association, chief executive of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and chair of the Australian Greenhouse Office Experts Group on Emissions Trading, "Existential climate-related security risk: A scenario approach," Breakthrough National Centre for Climate Restoration, 5-30-2019, https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/148cb0\_90dc2a2637f348edae45943a88da04d4.pdf, Date Accessed: 7-5-2019, SB)

2050: By 2050, there is broad scientific acceptance that system tipping-points for the West Antarctic Ice Sheet and a sea-ice-free Arctic summer were passed well before 1.5°C of warming, for the Greenland Ice Sheet well before 2°C, and for widespread permafrost loss and large-scale Amazon drought and dieback by 2.5°C. **The “hothouse Earth” scenario has been realised**, and Earth is headed for another degree or more of warming, especially since human greenhouse emissions are still significant. While sea levels have risen 0.5 metres by 2050, the increase may be 2–3 metres by 2100, and it is understood from historical analogues that seas may eventually rise by more than 25 metres. Thirty-five percent of the global land area, and 55 percent of the global population, are subject to more than 20 days a year of lethal heat conditions, **beyond the threshold of human survivability.** The destabilisation of the Jet Stream has very significantly affected the intensity and geographical distribution of the Asian and West African monsoons and, together with the further slowing of the Gulf Stream, is impinging on life support systems in Europe. North America suffers from **devastating weather extremes including wildfires, heatwaves, drought and inundation.** The summer monsoons in China have failed, and water flows into the great rivers of Asia are severely reduced by the loss of more than one-third of the Himalayan ice sheet. Glacial loss reaches 70 percent in the Andes, and rainfall in Mexico and central America falls by half. Semi-permanent El Nino conditions prevail. Aridification emerges over more than 30 percent of the world’s land surface. Desertification is severe in southern Africa, the southern Mediterranean, west Asia, the Middle East, inland Australia and across the south-western United States. Impacts: A number of **ecosystems collapse**, including coral reef systems, the Amazon rainforest and in the Arctic. Some poorer nations and regions, which lack capacity to provide artificially-cooled environments for their populations, become unviable. Deadly heat conditions persist for more than 100 days per year in West Africa, tropical South America, the Middle East and South-East Asia, which together with land degradation and rising sea levels contributes to 21 perhaps a billion people being displaced. Water availability decreases sharply in the most affected regions at lower latitudes (dry tropics and subtropics), affecting about two billion people worldwide. **Ag**riculture **becomes nonviable** in the dry subtropics. Most regions in the world see a significant drop in food production and increasing numbers of **extreme weather events**, including heat waves, floods and storms. **Food production is inadequate** to feed the global population and food prices skyrocket, as a consequence of a one-fifth decline in crop yields, a decline in the nutrition content of food crops, a catastrophic decline in insect populations, desertification, monsoon failure and **chronic water shortages**, and conditions **too hot for human habitation** in significant food-growing regions. The lower reaches of the agriculturally-important river deltas such as the Mekong, Ganges and Nile are inundated, and significant sectors of some of the world’s most populous cities — including Chennai, Mumbai, Jakarta, Guangzhou, Tianjin, Hong Kong, Ho Chi Minh City, Shanghai, Lagos, Bangkok and Manila — are **abandoned**. Some small islands become **uninhabitable**. Ten percent of Bangladesh is inundated, displacing 15 million people. According to the Global Challenges Foundation’s Global Catastrophic Risks 2018 report, even for 2°C of warming, more than a billion people may need to be relocated due to sea-level rise, and In high-end scenarios “the scale of destruction is beyond our capacity to model, with **a high likelihood of human civilisation coming to an end**”. 22

### Line-by-Line

### Underview

#### In conclusion, this debate centers around minimizing suffering, and when shifting to a prioritization of objectivity gives a platform to fiction with the same validity of fact, we must negate that in a democracy, a free press ought to prioritize objectivity over advocacy