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#### The 1AC is a misdiagnosis of the university – their techniques are enfolded within logistical transparency in which the worlds visibility and mappability is taken as ontological presumption to be achieved by techniques of resistance. The aff’s praxis of resistance is articulated through a grammar of concrete planning utilized by state governance and the neoliberal university that reproduces logistics as the terrain of the political – only a refusal of the aesthetics of planning, logistics, and transparency can facilitate fugitivity

Moten & Harney 9 – Fred Moten, professor of Performance Studies at New York University and has taught previously at University of California, Riverside, Duke University, Brown University, and the University of Iowa, and Stefano Harney, Professor of Strategic Management Education at Singapore Management University, 2009 (“Policy and Planning” Social Text 100 • Vol. 27, No. 3 • Fall 2009 Pages 182-186)

Policy is correction. Policy distinguishes itself from planning by distinguishing those who dwell in policy and x things, from those who dwell in planning and must be xed. This is the first rule of policy. It xes others. In an extension of Michel Foucault, we might say of this first rule that it remains concerned with how to be governed just right, how to x others in a position of equi- librium, even if this today requires constant recalibration. But the objects of this constant adjustment provoke this attention because they just don’t want to govern at all. And because such policy emerges materially from post-Fordist oppor- tunism, policy must optimally, for each policy maker, x others as others, as those who have not just made an error in planning (or indeed an error by planning) but who are themselves in error. And from the perspective of policy, of this post-Fordist opportunism, there is indeed something wrong with the multitude. They are out of joint — instead of constantly positing their position in contingency, they seek solidity, a place from which to plan, some ground on which to imagine, some love on which to count. Nor is this just a political problem from the point of view of policy, but an ontological one. Seeking xity, nding a steady place from which to launch a plan, hatch an escape, signals a problem of essentialism, of beings who think and act like they are something in particular, like they are somebody, although at the same time that something is, from the perspective of policy, whatever you say I am. To get these planners out of this problem of essentialism, this x- ity and repose, this security and base, they have to come to imagine they can be more, they can do more, they can change, they can be changed. Because right now, there is something wrong with them. We know there is something wrong with them because they keep making plans. And plans fail. Plans fail because that is policy. Plans must fail because planners must fail. Planners are static, essential, just surviving. They do not see clearly. They hear things. They lack perspective. They fail to see the complexity. Planners have no vision, no real hope for the future, just a plan here and now, an actually existing plan. They need hope. They need vision. They need to have their sights lifted above the furtive plans and night launches of their despairing lives. Vision. Because from the perspective of policy, it is too dark in there to see, in the black heart of the multitude. You can hear something, you can feel something, feel people going about their own business in there, feel them present at their own making. But hope can lift them above ground into the light, out of the shadows, away from these dark senses. Whether the hope is Fanonian redemption or Arendtian revaluation, policy will x these humans. Whether they lack consciousness or politics, utopianism or common sense, hope has arrived. With new vision, planners will become participants. And participants will be taught to reject essence for contingency, as if planning and improvisation, flexibility and fixity, and complexity and simplicity were opposed within an imposed composition there is no choice but to inhabit, as some exilic home. All that could not be seen in the dark heart of the multitude will be supposed absent, as policy checks its own imagination. But most of all they will participate. Policy is a mass effort. Left intellectuals will write articles in the newspapers. Philosophers will hold conferences on new utopias. Bloggers will debate. Politicians will surf. Change is the only constant here, the only constant of policy. Participating in change is the second rule of policy. Now hope is an orientation toward this participation in change, this participation as change. This is the hope policy gives to the multitude, a chance to stop digging and start circulating. Policy not only offers this hope, but enacts it. Those who dwell in policy do so not just by invoking contingency but riding it, by, in a sense, proving it. Those who dwell in policy are prepared. They are legible to change, liable to change, lendable to change. Policy is not so much a position as a disposition, a disposition toward display. This is why policy’s chief manifestation is governance. Governance should not be confused with government or governmen- tality. Governance is the new form of expropriation. It is the provocation of a certain kind of display, a display of interests as disinterestedness, a display of convertibility, a display of legibility. Governance offers a forum for policy, for bidding oneself, auctioning oneself, to post-Fordist production. Gover- nance is harvesting of immaterial labor, but a willing harvest, a death drive of labor. As capital cannot know directly affect, thought, sociality, imagi- nation, it must instead prospect for these in order to extract and abstract them as labor. This is the real bioprospecting. Governance, the voluntary but dissociative offering up of interests, willing participation in the general privacy and privation, grants capital this knowledge, this wealth-making capacity. Who is more keen on governance than the dweller in policy? On the new governance of universities, hospitals, corporations, governments, and prisoners, on the governance of NGOs, of Africa, of peace processes? Policy offers to help by offering its own interests, and if it really seeks to be valuable, provoking others to offer up their own interests, too. But governance despite its own hopes to universality is for the initi- ated, for those who know how to articulate interests disinterestedly, who know why they vote (not because someone is black or female but because he or she is smart), who have opinions and want to be taken seriously by serious people. In the meantime, policy also orders the quotidian sphere of aborted plans. Policy posits curriculum against study, child develop- ment against play, careers against jobs. It posits voice against voices, and gregariousness against friendship. Policy posits the public sphere, and the counterpublic sphere, and the black public sphere, against the illegal occupation of the illegitimately privatized. Policy is not the one against the many, the cynical against the roman- tic, or the pragmatic against the principled. It is simply baseless vision. It is against all conservation, all rest, all gathering, cooking, drinking, and smoking, if they lead to marronage. Policy’s vision is to break it up, move along, get ambition, and give it to your children. Policy’s hope is that there will be more policy, more participation, more change. However, there is also a danger in all this participation, a danger of crisis. When the multitude participates in policy without first being xed, this leads to crisis: participation without fully entering the enlightenment, without fully functioning families, without financial responsibility, with- out respect for the rule of law, without distance and irony; participation that is too loud, too fat, too loving, too full, too owing, too dread. This leads to crisis. People are in crisis. Economies are in crisis. We are facing an unprecedented crisis, a crisis of participation, a crisis of faith. Is there any hope? Yes, there is, if we can pull together, if we can share a vision of change. For policy, any crisis in the productivity of radical contingency is a crisis in participation, which is to say, a crisis provoked by the wrong participation of the multitude. This is the third rule of policy. The crisis of the credit crunch caused by subprime debtors, the crisis of race in the U.S. elections produced by Reverend Wright and Bernie Mac, the crisis in the Middle East produced by peace movements, the crisis of obesity produced by unhealthy eaters, the crisis of the environ- ment produced by Chinese and Indians, are all instances of uncorrected, unmanaged participation. If the multitude is to stop its sneaky plans only to participate in this way, crisis is inevitable. But policy diagnoses the problem: participation must be hopeful, it must have vision, it must embrace change. Participants must be fashioned who are hopeful, visionary change agents. Those who dwell in policy will lead the way, toward concrete changes in the face of the crisis. Be smart. Believe in change. This is what we have been waiting for. It’s time for the Left to offer solutions. Now’s the time, before it’s night again, and you start hearing D.O.C. They got a secret plan of their own and they won’t be corrected. Before you get stopped by KRS-One and asked for your plan, before Storm says “holla if you understand my plan ladies.” Before you start singing another half-illiterate fantasy. Before you are in the ongoing amplification at the dark heart of the multitude, the operations in its soft center. Before someone says let’s get together and get some land where we’ll still plan to be communist about communism, still plan to be unreconstructed about reconstruction, and still plan to be absolute about abolition. Policy can’t see it, policy can’t read it, but it’s intelligible if you got a plan.

#### Their investment into the university is a tool of speed-elitism. The move for more transparent discussions about revolutionary praxis mystifies the reliance on the highly exclusive and unethical technologies of the university. By figuring those technics as the metrics for liberatory strategization, that expands debate’s state of exploitation.

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Cries announcing the **demise** of the university abound, in particular in Europe and North America. Those who utter these cries often do this in an admirable attempt to **renew** the original mandate of the university, namely the fostering of **truth**, **justice** and **democratic debate**. Giving up on the now largely neoliberal and managerial university system that plagues Europe and the United States, some such critics try to mobilise a renewal of this mandate **outside academia’s institutional walls** with people and groups who represent an alternative to neoliberal globalisation. Much of this mobilisation is in turn done through technologies and discourses of mobility and tele-communication. Examples here are the European anti-Bologna ‘new university’ projects like Edu-Factory, the various autonomous virtual universities, and the intellectual collaboration with local and international activists and non-Western academics. I am referring here in particular to the promising formation of various extra-academic ‘activist-research’ networks and conferences over the last years, like Facoltà di Fuga (Faculty of Escape), Mobilized Investigation, Rete Ricercatori Precari (Network of Precarious Researchers), Investigacció (Research), Universidad Nómada (Nomadic University), and Glocal Research Space. Characteristically, these projects organise events that try to set up dialogues between non-Western and anti-neoliberal activists and academics, and carve out spaces for offline and web-based discussion and participation. Initiators and participants of these projects often conceptualise their positions as relating closely to **alter-globalist activism** – positions which hence are **hoped** to effectively **subvert neo-liberalism** as well as the **elitist-managerial university space** and its problematic method of scientific objectification for capitalist innovation. In this paper, I will explain how such announcements of **the university’s demise**, the conceptualisation of its current situation as **one of crisis**, as well as the mobilisation of **the true academic mandate** today which often segues into a **nostalgia for the original university** of independent thought, truth and justice, are themselves paradoxically **complicit in the techno-acceleration that** precisely **grounds and reproduces neo-liberalism.** This is because the playing out of such nostalgia typically runs through the problematic invocation of **the humanist opposition between doing and thinking.** This causes the terms and their mode of production to become increasingly intertwined under contemporary conditions of capitalist simulation in which ‘thinking’ is more and more done in service of an economist form of ‘doing’. The aforementioned commendable projects thus paradoxically appear foremost as symptoms of acceleration. Moreover, I will argue that this acceleration increasingly renders certain groups and individuals as **targets of techno-academic scrutiny and violence.** This increasing objectification that runs through the contemporary prostheses of the humanist subject hence spells disaster for non-technogenic forms of **gendered**, **raced** and **classed otherness.** I therefore suggest that this disastrous state of affairs is precisely carried out by the humanist promise of transcendence, democracy and justice that currently speeds up institutions like the university, and vice versa. Following this line of thought through, I claim that technological acceleration then surprisingly also harbours the promise of the coming of **a radical alternative** to neo-liberalism, and that it is precisely through the eschatological performance of this promise – arguably a repetition of the Christian belief in the apocalypse – that these activist-research projects and their neo-liberal mode of production may fruitfully **become the future objects of their own critique.** In short then, this paper attempts to affirm and displace the projects’ call for reinstating the original ‘true’ or transcending the current ‘spoilt’ university, in the hope of gesturing towards yet another alterity, through its own accelerated argument. I argue that the complicity of projects like Edu-Factory and Facoltà di Fuga in technological acceleration should primarily be understood in terms of what I in my work call **speed-elitism** (Hoofd, 2009: 201). I extrapolate the idea of speed-elitism largely from the work of John Armitage on the discursive and technocratic machinery underlying current neoliberal capitalism. In turn, I will argue that these activist-academic projects exacerbate speed-elitism by connecting the latter to Jacques Derrida’s ideas on technology and thought, as well as the late Bill Readings’ and Fred Moten and Stefano Harney’s critiques of the contemporary university. In ‘Dromoeconomics: Towards a Political Economy of Speed’, Armitage and Phil Graham suggest that due to the capitalist need for the production of excess, there is a strong relationship between the forces of communication and the logic of speed. They connect the logic of speed specifically to a certain militarisation of society under neoliberalism. In line with Virilio’s Speed and Politics, they argue that the areas of war, communication and trade are today intimately connected through the technological usurpation and control of space (and territory), and through the compression and regulation of time. Eventually, Armitage and Graham suggest that ‘**circulation** has become **an essential process** of capitalism, **an end in itself**’ (Armitage and Graham, 2001: 118) and that therefore any form of cultural production increasingly finds itself tied up in this logic. Neoliberal capitalism is hence a system in which the most intimate and fundamental aspects of human social life – in particular, forms of thought and linguistic difference – are formally subsumed under this system by being **circulated** as capital. In “Resisting the Neoliberal Discourse of Technology’, Armitage elaborates on this theme of circulation by pointing out that the current mode of late-capitalism relies on the continuous extension and validation of the infrastructure and the optimistic discourses of the new information technologies. Discourses that typically get repeated in favour of what I designate as the emerging speed-elite are those of connection, instantaneity, liberation, transformation, multiplicity and border crossing. **Speed-elitism**, I therefore argue, **replaces Eurocentrism** today as the primary nexus around which global and local disparities are organised, even though it largely builds on the formalisation of Eurocentric conceptual differences like doing versus thinking, and East versus West. Under speed-elitism, the utopian emphasis on the transparent mediation through technologies of instantaneity gives rise to the fantasy of the networked spaces ‘outside’ the traditional academic borders as radical spaces, as well as the desire for a productive dialogue or alliance between activism and academia. This would mean that activism and academia have become *relative* others under globalisation, in which the (non-Western or anti-capitalist) activist figures as some kind of *hallucination* of radical otherness for the Western intellectual. This technological hallucination serves an increasingly aggressive neo-colonial and patriarchal economic state of exploitation, despite – or perhaps rather *because of* – such technologies of travel and communication having come to figure as tools for liberation and transformation. So the discourses of techno-progress, making connections, heightened mobility and crossing borders in activist-academic alliances often go hand in hand with the (implicit) celebration of highly mediated spaces for action and communication between allied groups. Such **discourses** however **suppress** the **violent colonial, capitalist and patriarchal history** of those technological spaces and the subsequent unevenness of any such alliance. More severely, they **foster an oppressive** sort of **imaginary ‘collective’ or ‘unity of struggles’ through the myth of ‘truly’ allowing for radical difference and multiplicity within that space** – a form of **techno-inclusiveness that** in turn **excludes** a variety of **non-technogenic groups and slower classes**. That these highly mediated spaces of thought and knowledge production are exclusivist is also shown by Sheila Slaughter and Gary Rhoades’ study of the transformation of higher education in ‘The Academic Capitalist Knowledge/Learning Regime’. Slaughter and Rhoades argue that new technologies allow the neo-liberal university to precisely cross the borders of universities and external for-profit and non-profit agencies in the name of development, production and efficacy, resulting in ‘new circuits of knowledge’. These ‘opportunity structures’ (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004: 306) that the neoliberal economy creates, I in turn argue, become precisely those spaces of imagination that come to signify as well as being resultant of the university’s humanist promise of reaching-out to alterity. This paradoxically also **leads to** what Slaughter and Rhoades accurately identify as a ‘**restratification among and within** **colleges** and **universities’** (2004: 307). *Thought* is then increasingly exercised in, and made possible through, spaces that are just as much spaces of acceleration and militarisation. The increasing complicity of the humanities in the applied sciences within the contemporary university, and hence the integration of critical thinking and neo-liberalist acceleration, is also a major theme running through Jacques Derrida’s *Eyes of the University*. Derrida there suggests that neo-liberalisation entails a militarisation of the university, claiming that ‘never before has so-called basic research been so deeply committed to ends that are at the same time military ends’ (Derrida, 2004: 143). The intricate relation between the military (‘missiles’) and the imperatives of the humanities (‘missives’) also pervades Derrida’s ‘No Apocalypse, Not Now’, in which he argues that the increasing urgency with which intellectuals feel compelled to address disenfranchisement and crisis **paradoxically** leads to a differential acceleration of such oppression through technologies of instantaneous action. But the relationship between new technologies and the subject’s *perception* of and subsequent desire for the incorporation of otherness that speed-elitism engenders, is best illustrated through Derrida’s *Archive Fever* and *Monolingualism of the Other*. Derrida’s concerns here are not so much directly with the contemporary university, but rather with the link between how thought is situated in technologies of communication (like language) and the emergence of authority as well as (academic and activist) empowerment.

#### The conditioning of debate as a sight for liberal discussions about our orientations towards revolution merely engenders a semiotic fantasy of radicalism that paves over very real conditions of pain and death that make this space possible. Its try or die for a semiotic insurrection.

Occupied UC Berkeley 09 – Occupied University of California, Berkeley, 11/18/09 (“Civic Life, Social Death, and the UC,” The Necrosocial, Anti-Capitalist Projects, <https://anticapitalprojects.wordpress.com/2009/11/19/the-necrosocial/>) Justin

Yes, very much a cemetery. Only here there are no dirges, no prayers, only the repeated testing of our threshold for anxiety, humiliation, and debt. The classroom just like the workplace just like the university just like the state just like the economy manages our social death, translating what we once knew from high school, from work, from our family life into academic parlance, into acceptable forms of social conflict. Who knew that behind so much civic life (electoral campaigns, student body representatives, bureaucratic administrators, public relations officials, Peace and Conflict Studies, ad nauseam) was so much social death? What postures we maintain to claim representation, what limits we assume, what desires we dismiss? And in this moment of crisis they ask us to twist ourselves in a way that they can hear. Petitions to Sacramento, phone calls to Congressmen—even the chancellor patronizingly congratulates our September 24th student strike, shaping the meaning and the force of the movement as a movement against the policies of Sacramento. He expands his institutional authority to encompass the movement. When students begin to hold libraries over night, beginning to take our first baby step as an autonomous movement he reins us in by serendipitously announcing library money. He manages movement, he kills movement by funneling it into the electoral process. He manages our social death. He looks forward to these battles on his terrain, to eulogize a proposition, to win this or that—he and his look forward to exhausting us. He and his look forward to a reproduction of the logic of representative governance, the release valve of the university plunges us into an abyss where ideas are wisps of ether—that is, meaning is ripped from action. Let’s talk about the fight endlessly, but always only in their managed form: to perpetually deliberate, the endless fleshing-out-of—when we push the boundaries of this form they are quick to reconfigure themselves to contain us: the chancellor’s congratulations, the reopening of the libraries, the managed general assembly—there is no fight against the administration here, only its own extension. Each day passes in this way, the administration on the look out to shape student discourse—it happens without pause, we don’t notice nor do we care to. It becomes banal, thoughtless. So much so that we see we are accumulating days: one semester, two, how close to being this or that, how far? This accumulation is our shared history. This accumulation—every once in a while interrupted, violated by a riot, a wild protest, unforgettable fucking, the overwhelming joy of love, life shattering heartbreak—is a muted, but desirous life. A dead but restless and desirous life. The university steals and homogenizes our time yes, our bank accounts also, but it also steals and homogenizes meaning. As much as capital is invested in building a killing apparatus abroad, an incarceration apparatus in California, it is equally invested here in an apparatus for managing social death. Social death is, of course, simply the power source, the generator, of civic life with its talk of reform, responsibility, unity. A ‘life,’ then, which serves merely as the public relations mechanism for death: its garrulous slogans of freedom and democracy designed to obscure the shit and decay in which our feet are planted. Yes, the university is a graveyard, but it is also a factory: a factory of meaning which produces civic life and at the same time produces social death. A factory which produces the illusion that meaning and reality can be separated; which everywhere reproduces the empty reactionary behavior of students based on the values of life (identity), liberty (electoral politics), and happiness (private property). Everywhere the same whimsical ideas of the future. Everywhere democracy. Everywhere discourse to shape our desires and distress in a way acceptable to the electoral state, discourse designed to make our very moments here together into a set of legible and fruitless demands. Totally managed death. A machine for administering death, for the proliferation of technologies of death. As elsewhere, things rule. Dead objects rule. In this sense, it matters little what face one puts on the university—whether Yudof or some other lackey. These are merely the personifications of the rule of the dead, the pools of investments, the buildings, the flows of materials into and out of the physical space of the university—each one the product of some exploitation—which seek to absorb more of our work, more tuition, more energy. The university is a machine which wants to grow, to accumulate, to expand, to absorb more and more of the living into its peculiar and perverse machinery: high-tech research centers, new stadiums and office complexes. And at this critical juncture the only way it can continue to grow is by more intense exploitation, higher tuition, austerity measures for the departments that fail to pass the test of ‘relevancy.’ But the ‘irrelevant’ departments also have their place. With their ‘pure’ motives of knowledge for its own sake, they perpetuate the blind inertia of meaning ostensibly detached from its social context. As the university cultivates its cozy relationship with capital, war and power, these discourses and research programs play their own role, co-opting and containing radical potential. And so we attend lecture after lecture about how ‘discourse’ produces ‘subjects,’ ignoring the most obvious fact that we ourselves are produced by this discourse about discourse which leaves us believing that it is only words which matter, words about words which matter. The university gladly permits the precautionary lectures on biopower; on the production of race and gender; on the reification and the fetishization of commodities. A taste of the poison serves well to inoculate us against any confrontational radicalism. And all the while power weaves the invisible nets which contain and neutralize all thought and action, that bind revolution inside books, lecture halls. There is no need to speak truth to power when power already speaks the truth. The university is a graveyard– así es. The graveyard of liberal good intentions, of meritocracy, opportunity, equality, democracy. Here the tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. We graft our flesh, our labor, our debt to the skeletons of this or that social cliché. In seminars and lectures and essays, we pay tribute to the university’s ghosts, the ghosts of all those it has excluded—the immiserated, the incarcerated, the just-plain-fucked. They are summoned forth and banished by a few well-meaning phrases and research programs, given their book titles, their citations. This is our gothic—we are so morbidly aware, we are so practiced at stomaching horror that the horror is thoughtless. In this graveyard our actions will never touch, will never become the conduits of a movement, if we remain permanently barricaded within prescribed identity categories—our force will be dependent on the limited spaces of recognition built between us. Here we are at odds with one another socially, each of us: students, faculty, staff, homebums, activists, police, chancellors, administrators, bureaucrats, investors, politicians, faculty/ staff/ homebums/ activists/ police/ chancellors/ administrators/ bureaucrats/ investors/ politicians-to-be. That is, we are students, or students of color, or queer students of color, or faculty, or Philosophy Faculty, or Gender and Women Studies faculty, or we are custodians, or we are shift leaders—each with our own office, place, time, and given meaning. We form teams, clubs, fraternities, majors, departments, schools, unions, ideologies, identities, and subcultures—and thankfully each group gets its own designated burial plot. Who doesn’t participate in this graveyard? In the university we prostrate ourselves before a value of separation, which in reality translates to a value of domination. We spend money and energy trying to convince ourselves we’re brighter than everyone else. Somehow, we think, we possess some trait that means we deserve more than everyone else. We have measured ourselves and we have measured others. It should never feel terrible ordering others around, right? It should never feel terrible to diagnose people as an expert, manage them as a bureaucrat, test them as a professor, extract value from their capital as a businessman. It should feel good, gratifying, completing. It is our private wet dream for the future; everywhere, in everyone this same dream of domination. After all, we are intelligent, studious, young. We worked hard to be here, we deserve this. We are convinced, owned, broken. We know their values better than they do: life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness. This triumvirate of sacred values are ours of course, and in this moment of practiced theater—the fight between the university and its own students—we have used their words on their stages: Save public education! When those values are violated by the very institutions which are created to protect them, the veneer fades, the tired set collapses: and we call it injustice, we get indignant. We demand justice from them, for them to adhere to their values. What many have learned again and again is that these institutions don’t care for those values, not at all, not for all. And we are only beginning to understand that those values are not even our own. The values create popular images and ideals (healthcare, democracy, equality, happiness, individuality, pulling yourself up by your bootstraps, public education) while they mean in practice the selling of commodified identities, the state’s monopoly on violence, the expansion of markets and capital accumulation, the rule of property, the rule of exclusions based on race, gender, class, and domination and humiliation in general. They sell the practice through the image. We’re taught we’ll live the images once we accept the practice. In this crisis the Chancellors and Presidents, the Regents and the British Petroleums, the politicians and the managers, they all intend to be true to their values and capitalize on the university economically and socially—which is to say, nothing has changed, it is only an escalation, a provocation. Their most recent attempt to reorganize wealth and capital is called a crisis so that we are more willing to accept their new terms as well as what was always dead in the university, to see just how dead we are willing to play, how non-existent, how compliant, how desirous. Every institution has of course our best interest in mind, so much so that we’re willing to pay, to enter debt contracts, to strike a submissive pose in the classroom, in the lab, in the seminar, in the dorm, and eventually or simultaneously in the workplace to pay back those debts. Each bulging institutional value longing to become more than its sentiment through us, each of our empty gestures of feigned-anxiety to appear under pressure, or of cool-ambivalence to appear accustomed to horror, every moment of student life, is the management of our consent to social death. Social death is our banal acceptance of an institution’s meaning for our own lack of meaning. It’s the positions we thoughtlessly enact. It’s the particular nature of being owned. Social rupture is the initial divorce between the owners and the owned. A social movement is a function of war. War contains the ability to create a new frame, to build a new tension for the agents at play, new dynamics in the battles both for the meaning and the material. When we move without a return to their tired meaning, to their tired configurations of the material, we are engaging in war. It is November 2009. For an end to the values of social death we need ruptures and self-propelled, unmanaged movements of wild bodies. We need, we desire occupations. We are an antagonistic dead. Talk to your friends, take over rooms, take over as many of these dead buildings. We will find one another.

#### The alternative is

#### Voting neg is a withdrawal from the instrumental game of call-and-response into an aesthetic under-commons of redaction, opacity, and fugitive resonance. The refusal of demands for transparent or professionalized alternative frustrates the professional logistics of academia. Redaction is an aesthetic embodiment of indecision, a critical strategy of resistance that cannot be captured on a wiretap because it’s always on the tip of the tongue.

Moten & Harney 13 – Fred Moten, professor of Performance Studies at New York University and has taught previously at University of California, Riverside, Duke University, Brown University, and the University of Iowa, and Stefano Harney, Professor of Strategic Management Education at Singapore Management University, 2013 (Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study, pgs. 28-32)

In that undercommons of the university one can see that it is not a matter of teaching versus research or even the beyond of teaching ver- sus the individualisation of research. To enter this space is to inhabit the ruptural and enraptured disclosure of the commons that fugitive enlightenment enacts, the criminal, matricidal, queer, in the cistern, on the stroll of the stolen life, the life stolen by enlightenment and stolen back, where the commons give refuge, where the refuge gives commons. What the beyond of teaching is really about is not finishing oneself, not passing, not completing; it’s about allowing subjectivity to be unlawfully overcome by others, a radical passion and passivity such that one becomes unfit for subjection, because one does not possess the kind of agency that can hold the regulatory forces of subjecthood, and one cannot initiate the auto-interpellative torque that biopower subjection requires and rewards. It is not so much the teaching as it is the prophecy in the organization of the act of teaching. The prophecy that predicts its own organization and has therefore passed, as commons, and the prophecy that exceeds its own organization and therefore as yet can only be organized. Against the prophetic organization of the undercommons is arrayed its own deadening labor for the university, and beyond that, the negligence of professionalization, and the professionalization of the critical academic. The undercommons is therefore always an unsafe neighborhood. As Fredric Jameson reminds us, the university depends upon “Enlightenment-type critiques and demystification of belief and committed ideology, in order to clear the ground for unobstructed planning and ‘development.’” This is the weakness of the university, the lapse in its homeland security. It needs labor power for this “enlightenment- type critique,” but, somehow, labor always escapes. The premature subjects of the undercommons took the call seriously, or had to be serious about the call. They were not clear about planning, too mystical, too full of belief. And yet this labor force cannot reproduce itself, it must be reproduced. The university works for the day when it will be able to rid itself, like capital in general, of the trouble of labor. It will then be able to reproduce a labor force that understands itself as not only unnecessary but dangerous to the development of capitalism. Much pedagogy and scholarship is already dedicated in this direction. Students must come to see themselves as the problem, which, counter to the complaints of restorationist critics of the university, is precisely what it means to be a customer, to take on the burden of realisation and always necessarily be inadequate to it. Later, these students will be able to see themselves properly as obstacles to society, or perhaps, with lifelong learning, students will return having successfully diagnosed themselves as the problem. Still, the dream of an undifferentiated labor that knows itself as superfluous is interrupted precisely by the labor of clearing away the burn- ing roadblocks of ideology. While it is better that this police function be in the hands of the few, it still raises labor as difference, labor as the development of other labor, and therefore labor as a source of wealth. And although the enlightenment-type critique, as we suggest below, informs on, kisses the cheek of, any autonomous development as a re- sult of this difference in labor, there is a break in the wall here, a shal- low place in the river, a place to land under the rocks. The university still needs this clandestine labor to prepare this undifferentiated labor force, whose increasing specialisation and managerialist tendencies, again contra the restorationists, represent precisely the successful in- tegration of the division of labor with the universe of exchange that commands restorationist loyalty. Introducing this labor upon labor, and providing the space for its de- velopment, creates risks. Like the colonial police force recruited un- wittingly from guerrilla neighborhoods, university labor may harbor refugees, fugitives, renegades, and castaways. But there are good reasons for the university to be confident that such elements will be exposed or forced underground. Precautions have been taken, book lists have been drawn up, teaching observations conducted, invitations to contribute made. Yet against these precautions stands the immanence of transcendence, the necessary deregulation and the possibilities of criminality and fugitivity that labor upon labor requires. Maroon communities of composition teachers, mentorless graduate students, adjunct Marxist historians, out or queer management professors, state college ethnic studies departments, closed-down film programs, visa- expired Yemeni student newspaper editors, historically black college sociologists, and feminist engineers. And what will the university say of them? It will say they are unprofessional. This is not an arbitrary charge. It is the charge against the more than professional. How do those who exceed the profession, who exceed and by exceeding escape, how do those maroons problematize themselves, problematize the university, force the university to consider them a problem, a dan- ger? The undercommons is not, in short, the kind of fanciful com- munities of whimsy invoked by Bill Readings at the end of his book. The undercommons, its maroons, are always at war, always in hiding. There is no distinction between the American University and Professionalization But surely if one can write something on the surface of the univer- sity, if one can write for instance in the university about singularities – those events that refuse either the abstract or individual category of the bourgeois subject – one cannot say that there is no space in the university itself ? Surely there is some space here for a theory, a con- ference, a book, a school of thought? Surely the university also makes thought possible? Is not the purpose of the university as Universitas, as liberal arts, to make the commons, make the public, make the na- tion of democratic citizenry? Is it not therefore important to protect this Universitas, whatever its impurities, from professionalization in the university? But we would ask what is already not possible in this talk in the hallways, among the buildings, in rooms of the university about possibility? How is the thought of the outside, as Gayatri Spivak means it, already not possible in this complaint? The maroons know something about possibility. They are the condition of possibility of the production of knowledge in the university – the singularities against the writers of singularity, the writers who write, publish, travel, and speak. It is not merely a matter of the secret labor upon which such space is lifted, though of course such space is lifted from collective labor and by it. It is rather that to be a critical academic in the university is to be against the university, and to be against the university is always to recognize it and be recognized by it, and to institute the negligence of that internal outside, that unas- similated underground, a negligence of it that is precisely, we must insist, the basis of the professions. And this act of being against always already excludes the unrecognized modes of politics, the beyond of politics already in motion, the discredited criminal para-organiza- tion, what Robin Kelley might refer to as the infrapolitical field (and its music). It is not just the labor of the maroons but their prophetic organization that is negated by the idea of intellectual space in an organization called the university. This is why the negligence of the critical academic is always at the same time an assertion of bourgeois individualism. Such negligence is the essence of professionalization where it turns out professionalization is not the opposite of negligence but its mode of politics in the United States. It takes the form of a choice that excludes the prophetic organization of the undercommons – to be against, to put into question the knowledge object, let us say in this case the university, not so much without touching its founda- tion, as without touching one’s own condition of possibility, with- out admitting the Undercommons and being admitted to it. From this, a general negligence of condition is the only coherent position. Not so much an antifoundationalism or foundationalism, as both are used against each other to avoid contact with the undercom- mons. This always-negligent act is what leads us to say there is no distinction between the university in the United States and profes- sionalization. There is no point in trying to hold out the university against its professionalization. They are the same. Yet the maroons refuse to refuse professionalization, that is, to be against the university. The university will not recognize this indecision, and thus professionalization is shaped precisely by what it cannot acknowledge, its internal antagonism, its wayward labor, its surplus. Against this wayward labor it sends the critical, sends its claim that what is left beyond the critical is waste. But in fact, critical education only attempts to perfect professional education. The professions constitute themselves in an opposition to the unregulated and the ignorant without acknowledging the unregulated, ignorant, unprofessional labor that goes on not opposite them but within them. But if professional education ever slips in its labor, ever reveals its condition of possibility to the professions it supports and reconstitutes, critical education is there to pick it up, and to tell it, never mind – it was just a bad dream, the ravings, the drawings of the mad. Because critical education is precisely there to tell professional education to rethink its relationship to its opposite – by which criti- cal education means both itself and the unregulated, against which professional education is deployed. In other words, critical education arrives to support any faltering negligence, to be vigilant in its negli- gence, to be critically engaged in its negligence. It is more than an ally of professional education, it is its attempted completion. A professional education has become a critical education. But one should not applaud this fact. It should be taken for what it is, not progress in the professional schools, not cohabitation with the Universitas, but counterinsurgency, the refounding terrorism of law, coming for the discredited, coming for those who refuse to write off or write up the undercommons.

## 2

#### We advocate for the 1ACs method of scenario analysis sans their telos of affirming that in a democracy, a free press ought to prioritize objectivity over advocacy. .

#### That solves the aff – their method of solvency is about their scenario analysis of the resolution and developing political grammars of resistance to learn about muslim fugitivity. We’ll break this down – it’s not enough to say “objectivity is good and advocacy bad” in the abstract, rather, they have to have material offense from their advocacy that solves islamaphobia – if their offense is “discussions good” or “ballot good” then there’s no reason the telos of their revolution is necessary.

#### They fail the control-F test in their method page – all of their cards are about orientalism and islamophobia generally and not objectivity – card zero why the telos is key.

#### The net benefit is incompleteness.

Harney and Moten 11 – Stephano Harney and Fred Moten March 2021 "Refusing Completion: A Conversation" <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/116/379446/refusing-completion-a-conversation/> (Stefano Harney is the Professor of Strategic Management Education at Singapore Management University., Fred Moten is the professor of Performance Studies at New York University and has taught previously at University of California, Riverside, Duke University, Brown University, and the University of Iowa)//Elmer \*\*Modified for Problematic Rhetoric

FM: Maybe what we always also want to be doing is operating under the assumption that when it comes to thought, rigor and generosity are not separate from one another. That “intra-action,” to use Karen Barad’s term, is intra-active with another: that of black study and black studies. That’s where it’s at, as the Godfather would say. That’s what we’re interested in. And that’s also where we’re at in our lives, in our intellectual life together, and in our social life together as friends. It’s just that the syntax and the semantics that we have been given in order to try to understand that double intra-action is inadequate for the most part. We ask ourselves, how do we understand the relation between black study and black studies, and then we have to take two months to try to overcome the fact that “relation” ain’t the right word. In other words, the **intra-action of black study** and black studies **requires** something like what Barad calls “**experimental metaphysics**.” Or, maybe another way to put it is that what’s required are some experiments in anti-metaphysics. Maybe black study is just this continual experiment in anti-metaphysics. SH: All Incomplete is also **about the next town**, about what we heard about the next town, about **the next experiment** already going on, continually as Fred says. And so, for instance, I’m very grateful to the current generation of Guyanese feminist, activist scholars such as Kamala Kempadoo and Alissa Trotz who have made more available the work of the great Guyanese feminist activist intellectual Andaiye. We’ve been studying and teaching with Andaiye’s The Point Is to Change the World, and also with Lessons from the Damned by the Damned, the latter a collectively written book about a freedom school set up by black women in the late 1960s and early ’70s in Newark. Now, Andaiye talks about the research she did as part of Red Thread, an independent cross-racial organization of women in Guyana. She talks about how the poor and working class women who are keeping diaries on their social reproductive labor were doing research that she, Andaiye, could never do as well as them. Then, from the Damned, we hear the story of a key turning point in the freedom school. The women running the school have met some middle-class, teacher-qualified black women at a Vietnam protest and invited them back to the school. Much is gained by the encounter, but after a few weeks the women who run the school say something to the effect of, we loved them, but we had to send them away because they could not believe that we—in our position as black working-class women—were better placed to theorize this world. If we take these lessons from Andaiye and the Damned seriously, maybe we can get out of some of the metaphysical assumptions of our positions and roles. What Andaiye and the Damned are saying is that **poor people, poor black and Indian and indigenous women**, in these most vital instances **were better researchers and** better **theorists** than those of us who are traditionally and institutionally trained as such and rise through the “meritocracy.” So, we have to find some other reason for doing what we are doing—cause it is not because we are the best at it—and so we have to **find some other way**, **beyond** this **metaphysics of meritocracy we inhabit.** And from there it becomes clear that we are not the ones to sit in judgment, and this means we can **practice nothing but open admissions** and open promotion in the places where we teach, whether elementary schools, universities, or art academies. And what we would do is support the primary theorists and researchers as they come through, should they wish to come through, and should they wish to stay. And isn’t this serving the people? After all, serving the people never meant serving them breakfast. It meant being at the service of the people, because the people held what we all need, precariously, with only partial access sometimes themselves to this wealth, knowledge, and practice of how to learn about society and how to analyze it because it needs to be changed. That is why it was called a party of self-defense: to defend all this, not to imagine that the party was going to generate the wealth itself. Service becomes the answer to all the anxieties about allyship and class. And service is debt, partiality, incompleteness in action. SS: Your use of **incompleteness** reminds me in certain ways of how before you talked about **debt not as this crushing condition** **but** **as something that, in being unpayable**, **is the very principle of sociality**. So debt not as IMF-backed austerity measures, but **debt as** all those **things we owe to each other**. The way you talk about incompleteness strikes me as similar in that it’s **not incompleteness as a problem**—**like there’s something lacking in myself** which is fulfilled through another person—**but rather as a permanent state which is more of a blessing**, or something to be preserved. It’s not something that needs to be dealt with as a problem. Is that a fair reading? SH: Yes, I think that’s right. FM: Have you ever seen the film Jerry Maguire? The title character is this brutal drone of individuation whose whole life ends up depending upon his exploitation of a black football player, which he accomplishes with the help of a female assistant whom he later marries. The movie begins with Jerry Maguire being a successfully individuated man who’s complete, or thinks he is, until he gets stripped of all that. In order to find himself he’s got to attach himself in a more or less straight Hegelian mode to one who’s not quite really one, this player who shows out on and off the playing field while also modeling an authentic and loving family life, all of which reveals him never to have been the kind of free subject Jerry used to be. They call this a romantic comedy. It’s the story of the man who at the end of his personal (re)development—after having the biggest night of his life because the black football player literally endangers his own health in order to make a catch that will make him a superstar so that Jerry MaFuckingGuire can exploit him and attract other superstars who he can also exploit—finds that he can’t enjoy it without the woman who has made it all possible but whom he has exploited and demeaned and overlooked. That’s when this motherfucker breaks into a feminist consciousness-raising group in order to reclaim his wife. How does he get her back? Just by saying, “Hello,” according to her, but he gets to finish his speech by saying to her, “You complete me.” Like, he was at 87 percent and she was the final 13 percent. Now, he’s fucking complete when he gets her back. Well, [**screw**] ~~fuck~~ **completeness**. Not only that, ~~fuck~~ completeness **as a way of understanding** anything about what love actually is. What they call romantic comedy is really anti-romantic tragedy. It’s amazing that something like Jerry Maguire is offered as a representation of what it’s like to fall in love. If you’ve ever fallen you know that **the other person** or persons don’t complete you. They **incomplete you**. They fuck you the fuck up. It doesn’t leave you intact. It plays you, undermines you. It disturbs and **disrupts your individuation**. It obliterates not only the possibility of but the desire for individuation. If you think about it in those terms, incompleteness is a consummation devoutly to be wished. The entire genre of the romantic comedy is usually some white dude who’s being dragged against his will into the condition of incompleteness. When, finally, he submits to it, you know that the sequel of that movie will be all about the breakup, which follow’s the idea of individuation having had a chance to rally, which the regular miseries of monogamous heterosexuality—which Samuel R. Delany teaches us is the deepest perversion—are happy to provide. The idea of **completeness** **is ridiculous and genocidal**. **There’s** just no end **to the ways it continually seeks to destroy our shared capacity to breathe and ground**. It **predicates** **and requires** the constantly asserted revision of what Robinson calls “**the terms of order**.” It predicates and necessitates the constant **brutalization** of all the people in the world who resist those terms of order and who practice modalities of **social existence** that are not predicated on those terms of order, as Robinson shows in his beautifully radical use of ethnographic and anthropological work in The Terms of Order. We advocate for incompleteness. We think such advocacy is part of what it is “to preserve,” as he says, “the ontological totality.” To preserve the totality is to refuse its completion. That’s our ongoing ante- and anti-metaphysical experiment.

## Case

#### Objectivity creates media bubbles and right wing news.

Kelkar 19 (Shreeharsh. Shreeharsh Kelkar is lecturer in the Interdisciplinary Studies Field Major at UC Berkeley), Engaging Science, Technology, and Society 5 (2019), 86-106, Post-truth and the Search for Objectivity: Political Polarization and the Remaking of Knowledge Production

* Brackets included in original text

In an era where both political parties presided over coalitions that spanned the ideological spectrum, newspapers could practice a detached objectivity through which they could be critical of all political persuasions. **Political polarization however raised serious questions about journalistic objectivity as practiced. As polarization increased, partisans on both sides, especially conservatives, started to accuse mainstream media institutions of exhibiting “journalistic bias.” While journalists and academics studiously followed objective norms and cast themselves as experts, they were always more left-of-center in their own politics. Conservatives, not unreasonably, perceived this as “bias,” and therefore sought to create their own information ecosystem of think tanks and media. Aided partly by regulatory changes, this led to the creation of an alternative right-wing media ecosystem (like cable news channels and conservative talk radio) and new audiences who consumed them. A key feature of this alternative ecosystem was its focus on the biases of mainstream media institutions. The success of the alternative right-wing media ecosystem is reflected in its outsized influence on setting the goals of the Republican Party, a truly unprecedented state of affairs. Political scientists Matt Grossman and David Hopkins argue that “the establishment of an explicitly right-of-center media ecosystem as a conscious alternative to ‘mainstream’ journalism allows conservative media personalities to exert an influence over Republican officeholders and voters that has no true counterpart among Democrats**” (Grossmann and Hopkins 2016a). This has led to an information asymmetry in terms of the news and knowledge that circulates amongst publics of different political persuasions. While the right relies on its alternative information system, the left relies on traditional news media and intellectual sources [e.g. university research] that often implicitly flatter the Democratic worldview but do not portray themselves or their consumers as engaged in an ideological conflict. Similarly, left-of-center think tanks have adapted to conservative upstarts by frequently opposing them in policy debates, but still retain broader ties to scholarly researchers and closer adherence to academic norms. (Grossmann and Hopkins 2016a) The rise of the internet and the growth of internet publishing further complicated matters. The internet took classifieds away from newspapers and magazines, thereby taking away a chunk of their revenue; further, it brought forth a new class of proto-journalists: bloggers, citizen-activists, advocates, who utilized it to reach a broader audience. These new voices did not necessarily subscribe to the established model of journalistic objectivity, where the journalist remains invisible and reports all sides of a conflict. Instead, they created a new genre of writing (embodied today in outlets like Vox and Talking Points Memo) embodying a different style of objectivity: their writing style accords a prominent space to facts but proudly spurns the invisible-reporter view-from-nowhere model of the NYT or CNN. The writer’s loyalties are clear, facts and opinions are mixed, and every side does not get equal (or similar) coverage (Farrell and Drezner 2007).

#### Objectivity doesn’t solve misinformation – their evidence is correlative not causative.

**Karić 21** (Tijana. Tijana Karić is an Humboldt Research Fellow at the Philipps-University Marburg | PhD in Social and Political Psychology), and Janko Međedović. "It doesn’t matter what you watch, but how much you watch: social attitudes, media objectivity, and frequency of informing as predictors of conspiracy beliefs." (2021).

Surprisingly, the objectivity of the media sources participants inform themselves through does not play a significant role in predicting either conspiracy mentality, or specific COVID-19 conspiracy beliefs, leading to the rejection of the second hypothesis. However, this finding is in contrast with previous studies (e.g., Kim & Kim, 2021). Possible reasons for the insignificance of source objectivity for conspiracy theories may lie in several psychological mechanisms. First, the lingering effect of misinformation (Ecker et al., 2017) indicates that the original information leaves traces on attitudes even after (repeated) counter-argumentation, because cognitive representations remain in the memory. The second mechanism is the sleeper effect (Hovland et al., 1949), i.e. the dissociation of the message from the source due to discounting cues (unworthy of consideration because it is not credible). The effect of such information will remain significant for recipient's attitudes because the fake information prevails in the memory while the source fades away, despite the person's awareness of the nature of the source (Krekó, 2020). The third potential mechanism is motivated reasoning, i.e. the theory that conspiracy beliefs are rooted in a wider set of beliefs and serve as advantages for the ingroup, such as the external attribution of blame, collective self-esteem etc. (Krekó, 2015). In our study, media objectivity clearly correlates negatively with social attitudes and with beliefs that the virus is harmless. It might be argued that media objectivity itself does not directly predict conspiracy beliefs, but its relationship with conspiracy beliefs takes place entirely through attitudes: more authoritarian, religious and conservative individuals systematically follow less objective media. However, conspiracy beliefs are not related to which media they follow, but only to attitudinal dispositions. These assumptions require further research

#### OBJECTIVITY IS WHAT MAKES FAKE NEWS POSSIBLE, ANY HINT OF BIAS OR FACTUAL ERROR MAKE THE MEDIA LOSE CREDIBILITY. THIS ALLOWS PEOPLE TO REJECT NEWS REPORTS AS FABRICATIONS

**Winston 20** (Brian. Brian Winston is a journalist who is the first holder of the Lincoln Professorship at the University of Lincoln, United Kingdom. He was a Pro Vice Chancellor for 2005-2006 and the former dean of Media and Humanities), and Matthew Winston. The roots of fake news: Objecting to objective journalism. Routledge, 2020.

Populism 101 holds that disagreeing with the leader is never an honest difference of opinions. To disagree with the leader, criticise the leader, be anything less than fanatically supportive of the leader, is always an attack on not just the leader, but the nation, deliberately intending it harm. Whether a private citizen, a judge, or a journalist, why else would you do it? But enough about all that. The part of this that matters the most in the context of our argument is that tackling this type of Trumpian notion of fakery (which never includes his own fabrications) with endless cross-checked rebuttals is to address the wrong issue. All the advice currently being offered in the marketplace of ideas on how to sort the news from the dross is never going to be foolproof. Only skepticism in the context of one’s own prior knowledge, or ‘collateral experience’ (to use a phrase of Charles Peirce)24 of the world, will ‘protect’ you from the fake, and even that is obviously far from infallible. The rhetoric (at least) of a fake news/news dichotomy, however, must be noticed as it serves to re-enforce a vision of good and bad media which comforts ‘good’ (all too often simply meaning ‘mainstream’) media. This carries a significant cost: the current focus on the dichotomy masks the news media’s deepest problems, which, as we suggest above, are located in the ideology and practice of journalism itself, rather than in the credulity of those who consume it. Trumpian attacks gain traction because journalism promises what it conspicuously fails to deliver: the more loudly it insists on its truth, the greater the threat to its credibility. Fake news flourishes not so much because of pure lying as because seeking to provide unassailable accounts capturing reality in its entirety, the impossible ideal of the news (as supposedly produced by objective journalism), proves indeed to be exactly that – impossible – and so every visible failure can seem like further evidence that the news is not to be trusted. What is most concerning, then, is not fiction shot through with fact and then labelled as journalism, but the truths, such as they are, of well-intentioned journalism appearing to be tainted, whether by lies or otherwise, while claiming a high standard of objectivity, honesty, accuracy, etc. The news’s truth can be undermined by mendacities but is, far more often, compromised by accidental errors of one kind or another. Moreover, it is inevitably also contaminated, at the very least, by incompleteness and subjectivity. As we have explained, hopefully persuasively, these ingredients can never be entirely excluded from the recipe. However hard it may strive to avoid such impurities, they are always present, meaning that journalism itself is always doomed to be impure. Noticing this cannot amount to a crisis. Nor is it valuable to postulate a straightforward dichotomy between truth and falsehood in looking for fake news’s roots. Doing this only obscures the real nature of the issue which is grounded, as it has been for half a millennium, in journalism’s essential challenges. Against that fake news may be presented as a matter of truth and lies, just as it is presented as being a recent and suddenly all-pervasive phenomenon, but, as we will endeavour to demonstrate, that’s just wrong. Naive. Foolish. Deceptive. Fake News.

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

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

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