# TFA R4 – 1NC v Clear Lake ML

## 1

#### The standard is maximizing expected well-being. Prefer it:

#### [1] Pleasure and pain are the starting point for moral reasoning—they’re our most baseline desires and the only things that explain the intrinsic value of objects or actions

Moen 16, Ole Martin (PhD, Research Fellow in Philosophy at University of Oslo). "An Argument for Hedonism." Journal of Value Inquiry 50.2 (2016): 267.

Let us start by observing, empirically, that **a widely shared judgment about intrinsic value** and disvalue **is that pleasure is intrinsically valuable and pain is intrinsically disvaluable**. On virtually any proposed list of intrinsic values and disvalues (we will look at some of them below), pleasure is included among the intrinsic values and pain among the intrinsic disvalues. This inclusion makes intuitive sense, moreover, for **there is something undeniably good about the way pleasure feels and something undeniably bad about the way pain feels**, and neither the goodness of pleasure nor the badness of pain seems to be exhausted by the further effects that these experiences might have. “Pleasure” and “pain” **are** here **understood inclusively**, as encompassing anything hedonically positive and anything hedonically negative. 2 The special value statuses of pleasure and pain are manifested in how we treat these experiences in our everyday reasoning about values. If you tell me that you are heading for the convenience store**, I might ask: “What for**?” This is a reasonable question, for when you go to the convenience store you usually do so, not merely for the sake of going to the convenience store, but for the sake of achieving something further that you deem to be valuable. You might answer, for example: “To buy soda.” This answer makes sense, for soda is a nice thing and you can get it at the convenience store. I might further inquire, however: “What is buying the soda good for?” This further question can also be a reasonable one, for it need not be obvious why you want the soda. You might answer: “Well, I want it for the pleasure of drinking it.” If I then proceed by asking “But what is the pleasure of drinking the soda good for?” the discussion is likely to reach an awkward end. **The reason is that the pleasure is not good for anything further; it is simply that for which going to the convenience store and buying the soda is good**. 3 As Aristotle observes: “**We never ask** [a man] **what** his **end is in being pleased, because we assume that pleasure is choice worthy in itself**.”4 Presumably, a similar story can be told in the case of pains, for if someone says “This is painful!” we never respond by asking: “And why is that a problem?” We take for granted that **if something is painful, we have a sufficient explanation of why it is bad**. If we are onto something in our everyday reasoning about values, it seems that **pleasure and pain are both places where we reach the end of the line in matters of value**. Although **pleasure and pain thus seem to be good candidates for intrinsic value and disvalue**, several objections have been raised against this suggestion: (1) that pleasure and pain have instrumental but not intrinsic value/disvalue; (2) that pleasure and pain gain their value/disvalue derivatively, in virtue of satisfying/frustrating our desires; (3) that there is a subset of pleasures that are not intrinsically valuable (so-called “evil pleasures”) and a subset of pains that are not intrinsically disvaluable (so-called “noble pains”), and (4) that pain asymbolia, masochism, and practices such as wiggling a loose tooth render it implausible that pain is intrinsically disvaluable. I shall argue that these objections fail. Though it is, of course, an open question whether other objections to P1 might be more successful, I shall assume that if (1)–(4) fail, we are justified in believing that P1 is true itself a paragon of freedom—there will always be some agents able to interfere substantially with one’s choices. The effective level of protection one enjoys, and hence one’s actual degree of freedom, will vary according to multiple factors: how powerful one is, how powerful individuals in one’s vicinity are, how frequent police patrols are, and so on. Now, we saw above that what makes a slave unfree on Pettit’s view is the fact that his master has the power to interfere arbitrarily with his choices; in other words, what makes the slave unfree is the power relation that obtains between his master and him. The difﬁculty is that, in light of the facts I just mentioned, there is no reason to think that this power relation will be unique. A similar relation could obtain between the master and someone other than the slave: absent perfect state control, the master may very well have enough power to interfere in the lives of countless individuals. Yet it would be wrong to infer that these individuals lack freedom in the way the slave does; if they lack anything, it seems to be security. A problematic power relation can also obtain between the slave and someone other than the master, since there may be citizens who are more powerful than the master and who can therefore interfere with the slave’s choices at their discretion. Once again, it would be wrong to infer that these individuals make the slave unfree in the same way that the master does. Something appears to be missing from Pettit’s view. If I live in a particularly nasty part of town, then it may turn out that, when all the relevant factors are taken into account, I am just as vulnerable to outside interference as are the slaves in the royal palace, yet it does not follow that our conditions are equivalent from the point of view of freedom. As a matter of fact, we may be equally vulnerable to outside interference, but as a matter of right, our standings could not be more different. I have legal recourse against anyone who interferes with my freedom; the recourse may not be very effective—presumably it is not, if my overall vulnerability to outside interference is comparable to that of a slave— but I still have full legal standing.68 By contrast, the slave lacks legal recourse against the interventions of one speciﬁc individual: his master. It is that fact, on a Kantian view—a fact about the legal relation in which a slave stands to his master—that sets slaves apart from freemen. The point may appear trivial, but it does get something right: whereas one cannot identify a power relation that obtains uniquely between a slave and his master, the legal relation between them is undeniably unique. A master’s right to interfere with respect to his slave does not extend to freemen, regardless of how vulnerable they might be as a matter of fact, and citizens other than the master do not have the right to order the slave around, regardless of how powerful they might be. This suggests that Kant is correct in thinking that the ideal of freedom is essentially linked to a person’s having full legal standing. More speciﬁcally, he is correct in holding that the importance of rights is not exhausted by their contribution to the level of protection that an individual enjoys, as it must be on an instrumental view like Pettit’s. Although it does matter that rights be enforced with reasonable effectiveness, the sheer fact that one has adequate legal rights is essential to one’s standing as a free citizen. In this respect, Kant stays faithful to the idea that freedom is primarily a matter of standing—a standing that the freeman has and that the slave lacks. Pettit himself frequently insists on the idea, but he fails to do it justice when he claims that freedom is simply a matter of being adequately (and reliably) shielded against the strength of others. As Kant recognizes, the standing of a free citizen is a more complex matter than that. One could perhaps worry that the idea of legal standing is something of a red herring here—that it must ultimately be reducible to a complex network of power relations and, hence, that the position I attribute to Kant differs only nominally from Pettit’s. That seems to me doubtful. Viewing legal standing as essential to freedom makes sense only if our conception of the former includes conceptions of what constitutes a fully adequate scheme of legal rights, appropriate legal recourse, justiﬁed punishment, and so on. Only if one believes that these notions all boil down to power relations will Kant’s position appear similar to Pettit’s. On any other view—and certainly that includes most views recently defended by philosophers—the notion of legal standing will outstrip the power relations that ground Pettit’s theory.

#### [2] Extinction outweighs – we can’t afford to be wrong.

MacAskill 14 [William, Oxford Philosopher and youngest tenured philosopher in the world, Normative Uncertainty, 2014]

The human race might go extinct from a number of causes: asteroids, supervolcanoes, runaway climate change, pandemics, nuclear war, and the development and use of dangerous new technologies such as synthetic biology, all pose risks (even if very small) to the continued survival of the human race.184 And different moral views give opposing answers to question of whether this would be a good or a bad thing. It might seem obvious that human extinction would be a very bad thing, both because of the loss of potential future lives, and because of the loss of the scientific and artistic progress that we would make in the future. But the issue is at least unclear. The continuation of the human race would be a mixed bag: inevitably, it would involve both upsides and downsides. And if one regards it as much more important to avoid bad things happening than to promote good things happening then one could plausibly regard human extinction as a good thing.For example, one might regard the prevention of bads as being in general more important that the promotion of goods, as defended historically by G. E. Moore,185 and more recently by Thomas Hurka.186 One could weight the prevention of suffering as being much more important that the promotion of happiness. Or one could weight the prevention of objective bads, such as war and genocide, as being much more important than the promotion of objective goods, such as scientific and artistic progress. If the human race continues its future will inevitably involve suffering as well as happiness, and objective bads as well as objective goods. So, if one weights the bads sufficiently heavily against the goods, or if one is sufficiently pessimistic about humanity’s ability to achieve good outcomes, then one will regard human extinction as a good thing.187 However, even if we believe in a moral view according to which human extinction would be a good thing, we still have strong reason to prevent near-term human extinction. To see this, we must note three points. First, we should note that the extinction of the human race is an extremely high stakes moral issue. Humanity could be around for a very long time: if humans survive as long as the median mammal species, we will last another two million years. On this estimate, the number of humans in existence in the The future, given that we don’t go extinct any time soon, would be 2×10^14. So if it is good to bring new people into existence, then it’s very good to prevent human extinction. Second, human extinction is by its nature an irreversible scenario. If we continue to exist, then we always have the option of letting ourselves go extinct in the future (or, perhaps more realistically, of considerably reducing population size). But if we go extinct, then we can’t magically bring ourselves back into existence at a later date. Third, we should expect ourselves to progress, morally, over the next few centuries, as we have progressed in the past. So we should expect that in a few centuries’ time we will have better evidence about how to evaluate human extinction than we currently have. Given these three factors, it would be better to prevent the near-term extinction of the human race, even if we thought that the extinction of the human race would actually be a very good thing. To make this concrete, I’ll give the following simple but illustrative model. Suppose that we have 0.8 credence that it is a bad thing to produce new people, and 0.2 certain that it’s a good thing to produce new people; and the degree to which it is good to produce new people, if it is good, is the same as the degree to which it is bad to produce new people, if it is bad. That is, I’m supposing, for simplicity, that we know that one new life has one unit of value; we just don’t know whether that unit is positive or negative. And let’s use our estimate of 2×10^14 people who would exist in the future, if we avoid near-term human extinction. Given our stipulated credences, the expected benefit of letting the human race go extinct now would be (.8-.2)×(2×10^14) = 1.2×(10^14). Suppose that, if we let the human race continue and did research for 300 years, we would know for certain whether or not additional people are of positive or negative value. If so, then with the credences above we should think it 80% likely that we will find out that it is a bad thing to produce new people, and 20% likely that we will find out that it’s a good thing to produce new people. So there’s an 80% chance of a loss of 3×(10^10) (because of the delay of letting the human race go extinct), the expected value of which is 2.4×(10^10). But there’s also a 20% chance of a gain of 2×(10^14), the expected value of which is 4×(10^13). That is, in expected value terms, the cost of waiting for a few hundred years is vanishingly small compared with the benefit of keeping one’s options open while one gains new information.

[3] You should give me 30 speaks – I’m a senior and this is my last in person tournament so you should make it memorable

## 2

#### PIC Text: In a democracy except Ukraine, a free press ought to prioritize objectivity over advocacy. In Ukraine, a free press ought to prioritize objectivity over advocacy except in Ukrainian propaganda against Russia’s invasion.

#### Ukraine war is optimistic, but maintaining outside support and low Russian morale’s key

* Ukraine getting outside help from west
* Kyiv’s history in soviet union and ties to Russia lowers morale
* Low morale destroys new conscriptions which is key for Russia
* Gives example of Ukrainian propaganda dissolving Russian army

Knispel interviewing Goemans 3-9 [Sandra Knispel, (Hein Goemans, a professor of political science at the University of Rochester, is an expert on international conflicts—on how they begin and end.) 3-9-2022, "How to end the war in Ukraine," NewsCenter, https://www.rochester.edu/newscenter/how-to-end-the-ukraine-war-514522/] Jet

Q&A with Hein Goemans One or both sides must change their demands as a precursor to ending the war. What’s likely to happen in the current scenario? Putin made a big mistake by committing himself to total victory in Ukraine. Goemans: It depends on the performance on the battlefield, and a country’s expectations of outside help. Russia should have become more pessimistic in the last few days because Ukraine has shown its ability to inflict far greater costs on Russia than the Kremlin had anticipated. One would expect Russia therefore to lower its demands but we’ve seen very little evidence of that so far—only the demand of denazification seems to have been dropped. Overall, Putin still maintains that everything is going according to plan. If this continues, Ukrainian sovereignty may be at stake, which is dangerous and perhaps even stupid of Putin, who seems to be committing himself to total victory. If he can’t get it, he’ll be responsible and that makes a coup against him more likely. How has the situation changed for Ukraine and its demands for ending the war? Ukraine right now is not likely to accept anything less than full independence as a nation. Goemans: Ukraine must have gotten a lot more optimistic in recent days. Not just because its army has been doing reasonably well but because of the demonstrated incompetence of the Russian army. Yes, the Russians are still much stronger and much bigger, but there are problems with morale in the Russian army, and you see the remarkable level of Ukrainian support from the West. Ukrainians are still fighting for independence of their homeland and may maintain their claims to Luhansk and Donetsk in the Donbas region in south-eastern Ukraine. I don’t know whether they’d willing to give up Crimea at this point. One avenue worth exploring in peace negotiations might be true plebiscites, overseen by international observers. Can Putin credibly commit not to go beyond the invasion of Ukraine? In his February 21 speech, he expressed his aim to reconstitute the Russian Empire. Goemans: No, he cannot. Nobody would believe him if he said he’d stop at Ukraine. People are pointing to the failed attempt to appease Hitler with the Munich Agreement in 1938. So that’s a non-starter, especially with Putin’s February 21st speech in which he said he wants to reconstitute greater Russia or the Russian Empire. Western nations can no longer say, ‘Oh, he doesn’t mean that. We can still do business there and we can have gas if we give him just a little bit, maybe two Ukrainian towns or so.’ He made that impossible. Yes, the analogy is overused, but it really is like Hitler in 1938. People heard the speech and the appeasement alarm bells went off. Global view of Russia and former Soviet satellite countries labeled. (University of Rochester illustration / Michael Osadciw) A deciding factor in this war is going to happen in the next couple of weeks. Can you explain the role of Russian conscripts in this context? The question is how many new conscripts will actually show up because it’ll determine the strength of the Russian army on the ground in Ukraine. Goemans: There are two things to keep in mind: First, the new Russian conscription class is going to be drafted in April. It’ll be very informative to see how many people do not show up. Secondly, are the Russians really going to bomb Kyiv, a so-called “hero city of the Soviet Union,” into rubble like they did with Chechnya’s capital Grosny? Are they willing to kill tens of thousands of people? Those two benchmarks will happen in the next few weeks. How precarious is the situation for Putin’s own survival? He may keep fighting, even if he knows he’s losing, because the alternative may mean signing his own death warrant. Goemans: Putin may count on the fact that Ukrainians will give in if Kyiv is bombed. But if they don’t, that should make him more pessimistic. One would think that he’d have to lower his demands, and that at that point, some kind of deal would be possible. But Putin must come home with some kind of victory because otherwise he’s literally dead. That means he may keep fighting, even if he knows he’s losing, because the alternative is signing his own death warrant. That’s what happened in the First World War. Germany kept fighting for years, even though the leadership knew that they were losing within the first weeks of the war. You’re not hyperbolic when you say Putin is signing his own death warrant with a defeat? History has plenty of examples here. Goemans: No, I’m not. In a regime like Russia—which is clearly not a democracy, but also not quite a dictatorship—if you win a war, you’re the great hero; if you lose a war, you have shown your incompetence and you’ll be removed, which I have explored in my own research. You’ll be held as what’s known as a “culpable leader”—culpable for the fact that the gains of the war do not outweigh the losses. Historically such leaders have been removed from office, and they either have gone into exile, or have been jailed or killed. A recent example is the former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic. What’s frightening, and there are already signs of this, is that Putin is moving towards a dictatorship because only full repression will prevent a coup against him. In that case, both the Russian and the Ukrainian people will suffer horribly. What do you think would happen with the war if Putin’s regime were to be overthrown? “Most likely, Ukraine would strengthen its demands and now want Crimea back.” Goemans: It’s possible that the entire Russian superstructure would be wiped out—not just Putin, but all his cronies, his security advisers, the oligarchs. That whole top layer could be removed. So the question is, if there’s a coup against Putin, what would the new Russian government insist on? They’re not necessarily all going to say, “Okay, sorry Ukraine, we made a mistake. Please excuse us.” And Ukrainians would not necessarily accept that anyway. Most likely, Ukraine would strengthen its demands and want Crimea back. Putin has said he wants to effect regime change in Ukraine—would a new government even have any credibility with Ukrainians? Ukrainians have become unified against Russia. Goemans: I don’t think so. There’s a new serious form of unity among the Ukrainian people and Ukrainian identity, and it’s in direct opposition to the Russians. It would be very dangerous for any Ukrainian government to be seen as colluding with Russia. Any such attempt would likely result in the formation of independent fighting units that would keep going to get the Russians out of Ukraine. What are the minimum terms the West can accept? The West cannot accept Putin’s winning in Ukraine, but they might we willing to accept concessions on the Luhansk and Donetsk regions, if Ukraine is willing to entertain that. Goemans: That’s an important question. The West—that is Western Democracies—cannot, in my opinion, accept a victorious Putin. The West is genuinely and correctly afraid of “salami tactics”—if he takes Ukraine, he will next take Georgia, and then he will go to the Baltics. Annexation wouldn’t end, so it has to stop now. Particularly because Putin so unmistakably declared his intentions in that speech on February 21st. Would the West accept Crimea as being Russian? I don’t know. Would the West accept Luhansk along the provincial administrative borders (which is not the same as the current line of control, which is currently roughly half of the of the provinces)? I doubt that. I think the West may demand a return to the status quo ante. I don’t know if they can get that. Maybe Ukraine would have to give up the entire administrative region of Luhansk and Donetsk. But the West will want to go back to the status quo. When do you think the war will end? Either in the next month and a half, or it’ll be years. Goemans: Either in the next month and a half, or it’ll be years. Months, if the new class of Russian conscripts in April fails to turn up. Otherwise I’m not optimistic. It’ll be ongoing bloodshed, pulverizing of Ukrainian cities, coupled with insurgencies, and Russia will never have full control of Ukraine. But going back to the video of the captured Russian soldier who was ashamed of taking part in the invasion of Ukraine: If he returns to Russia, he’ll most likely be killed. Yet, he’s speaking up and he’s hoping that he affects another guy, and then maybe two other guys, and it spreads like that. That’s how an army dissolves. On the other hand, that’s also how a Ukrainian army becomes more determined.

#### Ukrainian propaganda is key to defeating Russia.

Stuart A. Thompson 22 (reporter in the technology department covering misinformation and disinformation.) and Davey Alba (technology reporter covering disinformation. In 2019, she won a Livingston Award for excellence in international reporting and a Mirror Award) 3/3/2022, nytimes, Fact and Mythmaking Blend in Ukraine’s Information War, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/03/technology/ukraine-war-misinfo.html

Just days into the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a pilot with a mysterious nickname was quickly becoming the conflict’s first wartime hero. Named the Ghost of Kyiv, the ace fighter had apparently single-handedly shot down several Russian fighter jets. The story was shared by the official Ukraine Twitter account on Sunday in a thrilling montage video set to thumping music, showing the fighter swooping through the Ukrainian skies as enemy planes exploded around him. The Security Service of Ukraine, the country’s main security agency, also relayed the tale on its official Telegram channel, which has over 700,000 subscribers. The story of a single pilot’s beating the superior Russian air force found wide appeal online, thanks to the official Ukraine accounts and many others. Videos of the so-called Ghost of Kyiv had more than 9.3 million views on Twitter, and the flier was mentioned in thousands of Facebook groups reaching up to 717 million followers. On YouTube, videos promoting the Ukrainian fighter collected 6.5 million views, while TikTok videos with the hashtag #ghostofkyiv reached 200 million views. There was just one problem: The Ghost of Kyiv may be a myth. While there are reports of some Russian planes that were destroyed in combat, there is no information linking them to a single Ukrainian pilot. One of the first videos that went viral, which was included in the montage shared by the official Ukraine Twitter account, was a computer rendering from a combat flight simulator originally uploaded by a YouTube user with just 3,000 subscribers. And a photo supposedly confirming the fighter’s existence, shared by a former president of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko, was from a 2019 Twitter post by the Ukrainian defense ministry. When the fact-checking website Snopes published an article debunking the video, some social media users pushed back. “Why can’t we just let people believe some things?” one Twitter user replied. “If the Russians believe it, it brings fear. If the Ukrainians believe it, it gives them hope.” **In the information war over the invasion of Ukraine, some of the country’s official accounts have pushed stories with questionable veracity, spreading anecdotes, gripping on-the-ground accounts and even some unverified information that was later proved false, in a rapid jumble of fact and myth.** The claims by Ukraine do not compare to the falsehoods being spread by Russia, which laid the groundwork for a “false flag” operation in the lead-up to the invasion, which the Biden administration sought to derail. As the invasion neared, Russia falsely claimed that it was responding to Ukrainian aggression and liberating citizens from fascists and neo-Nazis. And since the assault began, Russia made baseless claims that Ukrainians had indiscriminately bombed hospitals and killed civilians. **Instead, Ukraine’s online propaganda is largely focused on its heroes and martyrs, characters who help dramatize tales of Ukrainian fortitude and Russian aggression.** But the Ukrainian claims on social media have also raised thorny questions about how false and unproven content should be handled during war — when lives are at stake and a Western ally is fighting for its survival against a powerful invading force. **“Ukraine is involved in pretty classic propaganda,” said Laura Edelson, a computer scientist studying misinformation at New York University. “They are telling stories that support their narrative. Sometimes false information is making its way in there, too, and more of it is getting through because of the overall environment.” Anecdotes detailing Ukrainian bravery or Russian brutality are crucial to the country’s war plan, according to experts, and they are part of established war doctrine that values winning not just individual skirmishes but also the hearts and minds of citizens and international observers. That is especially important during this conflict, as Ukrainians try to keep morale high among the fighters and marshal global support for their cause. “If Ukraine had no messages of the righteousness of its cause, the popularity of its cause, the valor of its heroes, the suffering of its populace, then it would lose,” said Peter W. Singer, a strategist and senior fellow at New America, a think tank in Washington. “Not just the information war, but it would lose the overall war.”** In previous wars, combatants would try to sabotage enemy communication and limit the spread of wartime propaganda, even cutting physical communication lines like telegraph cables. **But there are fewer such cables in the internet age, so in addition to downing communication towers and disrupting pockets of internet access, the modern strategy involves flooding the internet with viral messages that drown out opposing narratives. That digital battle moved at startling speed, experts noted, using an array of social media accounts, official websites and news conferences streamed online to spread Ukraine’s message. “You have to have the message that goes the most viral,” Mr. Singer said.** That was the case with another report from Ukraine involving a remarkable confrontation on Snake Island, an outpost in the Black Sea. According to an audio recording released by Pravda, a Ukrainian newspaper, and later verified by Ukraine officials, 13 border guards were offered a frightening ultimatum by an advancing Russian military unit: Surrender or face an attack. The Ukrainians responded instead with an expletive, before apparently being killed. Audio of the exchange went viral on social media, and the clip posted on Feb. 24 by Pravda received more than 3.5 million views on YouTube. President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine personally announced the deaths in a video, saying each guard would be awarded the title Hero of Ukraine. But just days later, Ukrainian officials confirmed in a Facebook post that the men were still alive, taken prisoner by Russian forces. Social media has become the main conduit for pushing the information, verified or not, giving tech companies a role in the information war, too. The fake Ghost of Kyiv video, for instance, was flagged as “out of context” by Twitter, but the montage posted to Ukraine’s official Twitter account received no such flag. The false photo posted by Mr. Poroshenko, the former Ukrainian president, also had no flag. While Twitter monitors its service for harmful content, including manipulated or mislabeled videos, it said tweets simply mentioning the Ghost of Kyiv did not violate its rules. “When we identify content and accounts that violate the Twitter Rules, we’ll take enforcement action,” the company said. In exercising discretion over how unverified or false content is moderated, social media companies have decided to “pick a side,” said Alex Stamos, the director of the Stanford Internet Observatory and a former head of security at Facebook. **“I think this demonstrates the limits of ‘fact-checking’ in a fast-moving battle with real lives at stake,” Mr. Stamos said. He added that technology platforms never created rules against misinformation overall, instead targeting specific behaviors, actors and content. That leaves the truth behind some wartime narratives, like an apparent assassination plot against Mr. Zelensky or simply the number of troops killed in battle, fairly elusive, even as official accounts and news media share the information.** Those narratives have continued as the war marches on, revealing the contours of an information war aimed not just at Western audiences but also at Russian citizens. At the United Nations on Monday, the Ukrainian ambassador, Sergiy Kyslytsya, shared a series of text messages that he said had been retrieved from the phone of a dead Russian soldier. **“Mama, I’m in Ukraine. There is a real war raging here. I’m afraid,” the Russian soldier apparently wrote, according to Mr. Kyslytsya’s account, which he read in Russian. The tale seemed to evoke a narrative advanced by officials and shared extensively on social media that Russian soldiers are poorly trained and too young, and don’t want to be fighting their Ukrainian neighbors. “We are bombing all of the cities together, even targeting civilians.” The story, whether true or not, appears tailor-made for Russian civilians — particularly parents fretting over the fate of their enlisted children, experts said. “This is an age-old tactic that the Ukrainians are trying to use, and that is to draw the attention of the mothers and the families in Russia away from the more grandiose aims for war onto, instead, the human costs of war,” said Ian Garner, a historian focusing on Russia who has followed Russian-language propaganda during the conflict. “We know that this is really effective.”** Official Ukrainian accounts have also uploaded dozens of videos purportedly showing Russian prisoners of war, some with bloody bandages covering their arms or face. In the videos, the prisoners are heard denouncing the invasion. The videos may raise questions about whether Ukraine is violating the Geneva Conventions, which has rules about sharing images of war prisoners. Russia has also engaged in its own form of mythmaking, but experts say it has been far less effective. Rather than targeting international observers with emotional appeals, Russia has focused on swaying its own population to build support for the battle, Dr. Garner said. Since Russian state media is still calling the conflict a “special military operation” and not a war — in line with the description used by President Vladimir V. Putin — state broadcasters are left “trying to talk about a war that is apparently not happening,” Dr. Garner said. **The Russian government “can’t play to its strongest narratives of individual sacrifice,” he added, instead relying on stories of Ukrainians bombing hospitals and civilians, providing no evidence. Ukraine’s efforts to amplify its own messages also leave little room for Russia to dominate the conversation, said Mr. Singer, the strategist from New America.** “A key to information warfare in the age of social media is to recognize that the audience is both target of and participant in it,” he said. He added that social media users were “hopefully sharing out those messages, which makes them combatants of a sort as well.”

#### Ukraine’s info war is key to defeating Russia.

Sinan Aral 22 (director of the MIT Initiative on the Digital Economy and author of "The Hype Machine) 3/1/2022, Ukraine is winning the information war, Washington Post, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2022/03/01/information-war-zelensky-ukraine-putin-russia/>

**Today, the information war in Ukraine is more intense, more tightly contested and arguably more important than ever because motivating volunteer fighters at home and encouraging foreign support abroad are critical to success. And this time, it seems, Russia is losing. Reports abound on social media of more than 4,000 Russian casualties, images of crippled Russian helicopters and armored vehicles and cellphone videos of savage Russian missile attacks on civilian targets. This mix of official Ukrainian war statistics combined with videos (both verified and unverified), posted by Ukrainian citizens and sympathizers from the front lines, is painting a vivid picture of a homegrown resistance successfully slowing the advance of a much larger and ostensibly better organized military machine. Facebook posts showing Ukrainians kneeling in front of tanks to stop their progress and Twitter images of women and children sheltering in subways and basements set the emotional backdrop of senseless aggression against a peaceful nation. Viral videos and audio clips evoke a defiant optimism impossible to ignore: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky appearing via his cellphone walking the streets of Kyiv, unharmed, in a “proof of life” demonstration emphasizing his willingness to stay and fight for his country, despite a U.S. offer to evacuate him, for example, or the recording of soldiers in an isolated Ukrainian outpost on Snake Island, in the Black Sea, cursing and telling off the Russian Black Sea Fleet. These stories are spreading rapidly on social media and subsequently echoing through official news channels in a media feedback loop that amplifies the information war and broadcasts it on television sets all over the world.** Zelensky, in particular, is deftly outmaneuvering Putin in this information war. He rallied Ukrainian men to defend their homeland, used the encrypted messaging platform [Telegram to speak directly to the Russian people](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMTeSsnNCw0) to counter Putin’s narrative, urged the West to step up its assistance in defense of law, order and peace, and even [pleaded with foreigners](https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/live-blog/russia-ukraine-live-updates-n1290057/ncrd1290087#liveBlogCards) to cross the border into Ukraine to defend Western democracy. While misinformation exists on both sides, Zelensky gives the impression that he’s more committed to truth and transparency. In contrast, Russia has been secretive, obfuscating the true extent of its incursion into Ukraine, and out of touch, airing the rambling addresses of its leader. It’s as if Putin has forgotten that social media transitioned from text to real-time video around the time of the Crimean annexation. In today’s information war, Russian news claiming Zelensky had turned tail and fled was swiftly countered by a video selfie of the Ukrainian president in Kyiv, vowing to defend his homeland. The symbolic contrast between Zelensky striding through war-torn streets, confident even under fire, and Putin, seated, hunched over a large wooden desk in the safety of a secure office hundreds of miles away from the fighting, is stark. This time, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Google are also proactively engaged in the information war. During the Crimean annexation, they were reactive and struggled to keep up with misinformation and false abuse reports. Today, in Ukraine, they have [banned Russian state-owned media from advertising on their platforms](https://www.axios.com/youtube-meta-twitter-restrict-russian-state-media-323d966f-531e-40f5-aa06-3b82998589df.html) and [defiantly fact-checked](https://www.theverge.com/2022/2/25/22950874/russia-facebook-blocked-roskomnadzor-media-censorship) Putin’s propaganda despite Russia’s protests and a full ban of Twitter and a partial ban of Facebook in Russia. Facebook has spun up a special operations center, staffed with native Russian and Ukrainian speakers, to monitor misinformation posted about the war, added warning labels to war-related images that its software detects are more than a year old, and restricted access to content from the state-affiliated Russian media outlets RT and Sputnik. YouTube is restricting access to Russian state-owned media outlets for users in Ukraine, removing Russian state-owned channels from recommendations, and limiting their content’s reach across the platform. Twitter has temporarily banned all ads in Ukraine and Russia, added labels to tweets with links to Russian state-affiliated media and downranked their content in algorithmic timelines. While numerous fake videos are circulating on TikTok about Ukraine, the Chinese-owned platform has no comprehensive policy on policing information about the conflict. Despite blocking state-owned Russian media in the European Union, this information flows freely in Ukraine and Russia on the platform, now dubbed “WarTok” by some observers, in part because it is organizing such videos into a convenient discover playlist by the same name. **The information war is critical to what happens next in Ukraine for several reasons. It motivates the resistance by inspiring Ukrainian citizens to take up arms in defense of their country and motivating them with social proof that they are united and not fighting alone. It encourages foreign assistance, pressuring Europe and the United States to step up their efforts to end the conflict. It fans the flames of protest in Russia, mobilizing the antiwar movement in Moscow and elsewhere in defiance of Putin’s aggression. And it may even eventually demoralize Russian troops, who must be wondering what on earth they are doing in Ukraine if the motivation for the intervention has been a lie all along. When Russia struck a Ukrainian television tower on Tuesday, it seemed to confirm Moscow’s keen awareness of the need to counter Ukraine’s information war and to highlight the importance of information in modern conflicts. Information campaigns are difficult to quantify during the fog of war. But while it is hard to pinpoint the extent to which the information war is contributing to the overwhelming international unity against Putin’s aggression, one thing is clear: Social media, mainstream media and the narrative framing of the invasion of Ukraine undoubtedly will play an important role in how this conflict ends. Now, vigilance and fortitude are not only needed on the battlefield, where lives and territory will be won and lost, but also will be essential online, where the hearts and minds of the world will be won or lost.**

#### Russian win would lead to escalation in multiple forums – goes global.

LIANA FIX 22 (Resident Fellow at the German Marshall Fund, in Washington, D.C). MICHAEL KIMMAGE (Professor of History at the Catholic University of America and a Visiting Fellow at the German Marshall Fund. )2/18/22, What If Russia Wins? A Kremlin-Controlled Ukraine Would Transform Europe, Foreign Affairs, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/ukraine/2022-02-18/what-if-russia-wins>

If Russia gains control of Ukraine or manages to destabilize it on a major scale, a new era for the United States and for Europe will begin. U.S. and European leaders would face the dual challenge of rethinking European security and of not being drawn into a larger war with Russia. All sides would have to consider the potential of nuclear-armed adversaries in direct confrontation. These two responsibilities—robustly defending European peace and prudently avoiding military escalation with Russia—will not necessarily be compatible. The United States and its allies could find themselves deeply unprepared for the task of having to create a new European security order as a result of Russia’s military actions in Ukraine.

MANY WAYS TO WIN

For Russia, victory in Ukraine could take various forms. As in [Syria](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/syria/2016-03-20/russias-pyrrhic-victory-syria), victory does not have to result in a sustainable settlement. It could involve the installation of a compliant government in Kyiv or the partition of the country. Alternatively, the defeat of the Ukrainian military and the negotiation of a Ukrainian surrender could effectively transform Ukraine into a failed state. Russia could also employ devastating cyberattacks and disinformation tools, backed by the threat of force, to cripple the country and induce regime change. With any of these outcomes, Ukraine will have been effectively detached from the West.

If Russia achieves its political aims in Ukraine by military means, Europe will not be what it was before the war. Not only will U.S. primacy in Europe have been qualified; any sense that the European Union or NATO can ensure peace on the continent will be the artifact of a lost age. Instead, security in Europe will have to be reduced to defending the core members of the EU and NATO. Everyone outside the clubs will stand alone, with the exception of Finland and Sweden. This may not necessarily be a conscious decision to end enlargement or association policies; but it will be de facto policy. Under a perceived siege by Russia, the EU and NATO will no longer have the capacity for ambitious policies beyond their own borders.

The United States and Europe will also be in a state of permanent economic war with Russia. The West will seek to enforce sweeping sanctions, which Russia is likely to parry with cyber-measures and energy blackmailing, given the economic asymmetries. China might well stand on Russia’s side in this economic tit for tat. Meanwhile, domestic politics in European countries will resemble a twenty-first-century great game, in which Russia will be studying Europe for any breakdown in the commitment to NATO and to the transatlantic relationship. Through methods fair and foul, Russia will take whatever opportunity comes its way to influence public opinion and elections in European countries. Russia will be an anarchic presence—sometimes real, sometimes imagined—in every instance of European political instability.

Cold War analogies will not be helpful in a world with a Russianized Ukraine. The Cold War border in Europe had its flash points, but it was stabilized in a mutually acceptable fashion in the Helsinki Final Act of 1975. By contrast, Russian suzerainty over Ukraine would open a vast zone of destabilization and insecurity from Estonia to Poland to Romania to Turkey. For as long as it lasts, Russia’s presence in Ukraine will be perceived by Ukraine’s neighbors as provocative and unacceptable and, for some, as a threat to their own security. Amid this shifting dynamic, order in Europe will have to be conceived of in primarily military terms—which, since Russia has a stronger hand in the military than in the economic realm, will be in the Kremlin’s interest—sidelining nonmilitary institutions such as the European Union.

Russia has Europe’s largest conventional military, which it is more than ready to use. The EU’s defense policy—in contrast to NATO’s—is far from being able to provide security for its members. Thus will military reassurance, especially of the EU’s eastern members, be key. Responding to a revanchist Russia with sanctions and with the rhetorical proclamation of a rules-based international order will not be sufficient.

IMPERILING EUROPE'S EAST

In the event of a Russian victory in Ukraine, Germany‘s position in Europe will be severely challenged. Germany is a marginal military power that has based its postwar political identity on the rejection of war. The ring of friends it has surrounded itself with, especially in the east with Poland and the Baltic states, risks being destabilized by Russia. France and the United Kingdom will assume leading roles in European affairs by virtue of their comparatively strong militaries and long tradition of military interventions. The key factor in Europe, however, will remain the United States. NATO will depend on U.S. support as will the anxious and imperiled countries of Europe’s east, the frontline nations arrayed along a now very large, expanded, and uncertain line of contact with Russia, including Belarus and the Russian-controlled parts of Ukraine.

Eastern member states, including Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Romania, will likely have substantial numbers of NATO troops permanently stationed on their soil. A request from Finland and Sweden to gain an Article 5 commitment and to join NATO would be impossible to reject. In Ukraine, EU and NATO countries will never recognize a new Russian-backed regime created by Moscow. But they will face the same challenge they do with Belarus: wielding sanctions without punishing the population and supporting those in need without having access to them. Some NATO members will bolster a Ukrainian insurgency, to which Russia will respond by threatening NATO members.

Ukraine’s predicament will be very great. Refugees will flee in multiple directions, quite possibly in the millions. And those parts of the Ukrainian military that are not directly defeated will continue fighting, echoing the partisan warfare that tore apart this whole region of Europe during and after World War II.

The permanent state of escalation between Russia and Europe may stay cold from a military perspective. It is likely, though, to be economically hot. The sanctions put on Russia in 2014, which were connected to formal diplomacy (often referred to as the “Minsk” process, after the city in which the negotiations were held), were not draconian. They were reversible as well as conditional. Following a Russian invasion of Ukraine, new sanctions on banking and on technology transfer would be significant and permanent. They would come in the wake of failed diplomacy and would start at “the top of the ladder,” according to the U.S. administration. In response, Russia will retaliate, quite possibly in the cyber-domain as well as in the energy sector. Moscow will limit access to critical goods such as titanium, of which Russia has been the world’s second-largest exporter. This war of attrition will test both sides. Russia will be ruthless in trying to get one or several European states to back away from economic conflict by linking a relaxation in tension to these countries’ self-interest, thus undermining consensus in the EU and NATO.

Europe’s strong suit is its economic leverage. Russia’s asset will be any source of domestic division or disruption in Europe or in Europe’s transatlantic partners. Here Russia will be proactive and opportunistic. If a pro-Russian movement or candidate shows up, that candidate can be encouraged directly or indirectly. If an economic or political sore point diminishes the foreign policy efficacy of the United States and its allies, it will be a weapon for Russian propaganda efforts and for Russian espionage.

Much of this is already happening. But a war in Ukraine will up the ante. Russia will use more resources and be unchained in its choice of instruments. The massive refugee flows arriving in Europe will exacerbate the EU’s unresolved refugee policy and provide fertile ground for populists. The holy grail of these informational, political, and cyberbattles will be the 2024 presidential election in the United States. Europe’s future will depend on this election. The election of Donald Trump or of a Trumpian candidate might destroy the transatlantic relationship at Europe’s hour of maximum peril, putting into question NATO’s position and its security guarantees for Europe.

TURNING NATO INWARD

For the United States, a Russian victory would have profound effects on its grand strategy in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. First, Russian success in Ukraine would require Washington to pivot to Europe. No ambiguity about NATO’s Article 5 (of the kind experienced under Trump) will be permissible. Only a strong U.S. commitment to European security will prevent Russia from dividing European countries from one another. This will be difficult in light of competing priorities, especially those that confront the United States in a deteriorating relationship with China. But the interests at stake are fundamental. The United States has very large commercial equities in Europe. The European Union and the United States are each other’s largest trade and investment partners, with trade in goods and services totaling $1.1 trillion in 2019. A well-functioning, peaceful Europe augments American foreign policy—on climate change, on nonproliferation, on global public health, and on the management of tensions with China or Russia. If Europe is destabilized, then the United States will be much more alone in the world.

NATO is the logical means by which the United States can provide security reassurance to Europe and deter Russia. A war in Ukraine would revive NATO not as a democracy-building enterprise or as a tool for out-of-area expeditions like the war in Afghanistan but as the unsurpassed defensive military alliance that it was designed to be. Although Europeans will be demanding a greater military commitment to Europe from the United States, a broader Russian invasion of Ukraine should drive every NATO member to increase its defense spending. For Europeans, this would be the final call to improve Europe’s defensive capabilities—in tandem with the United States—in order to help the United States manage the Russian-Chinese dilemma.

For a Moscow now in permanent confrontation with the West, Beijing could serve as an economic backstop and a partner in opposing U.S. hegemony. In the worst case for U.S. grand strategy, China might be emboldened by Russia’s assertiveness and threaten confrontation over Taiwan. But there is no guarantee that an escalation in Ukraine will benefit the Sino-Russian relationship. China’s ambition to become the central node of the Eurasian economy will be damaged by war in Europe, because of the brutal uncertainties war brings. Chinese irritation with a Russia on the march will not enable a rapprochement between Washington and [Beijing](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/competition-with-china-without-catastrophe), but it may initiate new conversations.

#### Nuclear detonations cause nuclear winter and extinction.

**Starr 15** Steven Starr, 10-14-2015, "Nuclear War, Nuclear Winter, and Human Extinction," Federation Of American Scientists, [Steven Starr is the director of the University of Missouri’s Clinical Laboratory Science Program, as well as a senior scientist at the Physicians for Social Responsibility. He has been published in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and the Strategic Arms Reduction (STAR) website of the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology.], https://fas.org/pir-pubs/nuclear-war-nuclear-winter-and-human-extinction/, SJBE

While it is impossible to precisely predict all the human impacts that would result from a nuclear winter, it is relatively simple to predict those which would be most profound. **That is, a nuclear winter would cause most humans and large animals to die from nuclear famine in a mass extinction event similar to the one that wiped out the dinosaurs**. **Following the detonation** (in conflict) **of** US and/or Russian launch-ready **strategic nuclear weapons, nuclear firestorms would burn simultaneously over a total land surface area of many thousands or tens of thousands of square miles. These mass fires, many of which would rage over large cities and industrial areas, would release many tens of millions of tons of black carbon soot and smoke** (up to [180 million tons](http://climate.envsci.rutgers.edu/pdf/ToonRobockTurcoPhysicsToday.pdf), according to peer-reviewed studies), **which would rise rapidly above cloud level and into the stratosphere.** [For an explanation of the calculation of smoke emissions, see [Atmospheric effects & societal consequences of regional scale nuclear conflicts](http://climate.envsci.rutgers.edu/pdf/acp-7-1973-2007.pdf).] **The scientists who completed the most recent peer-reviewed studies on nuclear winter discovered that the sunlight would heat the smoke, producing a self-lofting effect that would not only aid the rise of the smoke into the stratosphere (above cloud level, where it could not be rained out), but act to keep the smoke in the stratosphere for 10 years or more**. The longevity of the smoke layer would act to greatly increase the severity of its effects upon the biosphere. **Once in the stratosphere, the smoke** (predicted to be produced by a range of strategic nuclear wars) **would rapidly engulf the Earth and form a** [**dense stratospheric smoke layer**](http://www.nucleardarkness.org/warconsequences/hundredfiftytonessmoke/). **The smoke from a war fought with strategic nuclear weapons would quickly prevent up to 70% of sunlight from reaching the surface of the Northern Hemisphere and 35% of sunlight from reaching the surface of the Southern Hemisphere.** Such an enormous loss of warming sunlight would produce Ice Age weather conditions on Earth in a matter of weeks. **For a period of 1-3 years following the war, temperatures would fall below freezing every day in the central agricultural zones of North America and Eurasia.** [For an explanation of nuclear winter, see [Nuclear winter revisited with a modern climate model and current nuclear arsenals: Still catastrophic consequences](http://climate.envsci.rutgers.edu/pdf/RobockNW2006JD008235.pdf).] Nuclear winter would cause average global surface temperatures to become colder than they were at the height of the last Ice Age. **Such extreme cold would eliminate growing seasons for many years, probably for a decade or longer.** Can you imagine a winter that lasts for ten years? The results of such a scenario are obvious. **Temperatures would be much too cold to grow food, and they would remain this way long enough to cause most humans and animals to starve to death. Global nuclear famine would ensue in a setting in which the infrastructure of the combatant nations has been totally destroyed,** resulting in massive amounts of chemical and radioactive toxins being released into the biosphere. We don’t need a sophisticated study to tell us that no food and Ice Age temperatures for a decade would kill most people and animals on the planet. Would the few remaining survivors be able to survive in a radioactive, toxic environment? It is, of course, debatable whether or not nuclear winter could cause human extinction. There is essentially no way to truly “know” without fighting a strategic nuclear war. Yet while it is crucial that we all understand the mortal peril that we face, **it is not necessary to engage in an unwinnable academic debate as to whether any humans will survive.**

## 3

#### Policies that promote objectivity become the pretext for government crackdowns on legitimate journalism

West 17 Darrell M. West (Vice President and Director - Governance Studies Senior Fellow - Center for Technology Innovation Douglas Dillon Chair in Governmental Studies) 12/18/2017, How to combat fake news and disinformation, Brookings, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-to-combat-fake-news-and-disinformation/>Karan

Government harassment of journalists is a serious problem in many parts of the world. United Nations Human Rights Council Special Rapporteur David Kaye notes that “all too many leaders see journalism as the enemy, reporters as rogue actors, tweeps as terrorists, and bloggers as blasphemers.”[[23]](https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-to-combat-fake-news-and-disinformation/#footnote-23) In Freedom House’s most recent report on global press freedoms, researchers found that media freedom was at its lowest point in 13 years and there were “unprecedented threats to journalists and media outlets in major democracies and new moves by authoritarian states to control the media, including beyond their borders.”[[24]](https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-to-combat-fake-news-and-disinformation/" \l "footnote-24) Journalists can often be accused of generating fake news and there have been numerous cases of legitimate journalists being arrested or their work being subject to official scrutiny. In Egypt, an Al-Jazeera producer was arrested on charges of “incitement against state institutions and broadcasting fake news with the aim of spreading chaos.”[[25]](https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-to-combat-fake-news-and-disinformation/" \l "footnote-25) This was after the network broadcast a documentary criticizing Egyptian military conscription. Some governments have also moved to create government regulations to control information flows and censor content on social media platforms. Indonesia has established a government agency to “monitor news circulating online” and “tackle fake news.”[[26]](https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-to-combat-fake-news-and-disinformation/#footnote-26) In the Philippines, Senator Joel Villanueva has introduced a bill that would impose up to a five-year prison term for those who publish or distribute “fake news,” which the legislation defined as activities that “cause panic, division, chaos, violence, and hate, or those which exhibit a propaganda to blacken or discredit one’s reputation.”[[27]](https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-to-combat-fake-news-and-disinformation/" \l "footnote-27) Critics have condemned the bill’s definition of social networks, misinformation, hate speech, and illegal speech as too broad, and believe that it risks criminalizing investigative journalism and limiting freedom of expression. Newspaper columnist Jarius Bondoc noted “the bill is prone to abuse. A bigot administration can apply it to suppress the opposition. By prosecuting critics as news fakers, the government can stifle legitimate dissent. Whistleblowers, not the grafters, would be imprisoned and fined for daring to talk. Investigative journalists would cram the jails.”[[28]](https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-to-combat-fake-news-and-disinformation/#footnote-28) In a situation of false information, it is tempting for legal authorities to deal with offensive content and false news by forbidding or regulating it. For example, in Germany, legislation was passed in June 2017 that forces digital platforms to delete hate speech and misinformation. It requires large social media companies to “delete illegal, racist or slanderous comments and posts within 24 hours.” Companies can be fined up to $57 million for content that is not deleted from the platform, such as Nazi symbols, Holocaust denials, or language classified as hate speech.[[29]](https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-to-combat-fake-news-and-disinformation/" \l "footnote-29) The German legislation’s critics have complained that its definition of “obviously” illegal speech risks censorship and a loss of freedom of speech. As an illustration, the law applies the rules to social media platforms in the country with more than 2 million users. Commentators have noted that is not a reasonable way to define relevant social networks. There could be much smaller networks that inflict greater social damage. In addition, it is not always clear how to identify objectionable content.[[30]](https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-to-combat-fake-news-and-disinformation/" \l "footnote-30) While it is pretty clear how to define speech advocating violence or harm to other people, it is less apparent when talking about hate speech or “defamation of the state.” What is considered “hateful” to one individual may not be to someone else. There is some ambiguity regarding what constitutes hate speech in a digital context. Does it include mistakes in reporting, opinion piece commentary, political satire, leader misstatements, or outright fabrications? Watchdog organizations complained that “overly broad language could affect a range of platforms and services and put decisions about what is illegal content into the hands of private companies that may be inclined to over-censor in order to avoid potential fines.”[[31]](https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-to-combat-fake-news-and-disinformation/" \l "footnote-31) Overly restrictive regulation of internet platforms in open societies sets a dangerous precedent and can encourage authoritarian regimes to continue and/or expand censorship. This will restrict global freedom of expression and generate hostility to democratic governance. Democracies that place undue limits on speech risk legitimizing authoritarian leaders and their efforts to crackdown basic human rights. It is crucial that efforts to improve news quality not weaken journalistic content or the investigative landscape facing reporters.

#### Gov. crackdowns on media are a form of soft authoritarianism that escalates into complete tyranny

Christensen 21 Christensen, Devin (PhD in Political Science, UNC, Chapel Hill), John Lovett, and John A. Curiel. "Mainstream Media Recirculation of Trust-Reducing Social Media Messages." American Politics Research (2021): 1532673X211023931.

Trump’s consistent hostility and violent reactivity to criticism on Twitter mimicked the media outreach strategies of so-called “soft” authoritarian leaders seeking to undermine democratic norms and institutions in order to consolidate power in themselves. **“Soft” authoritarianism differs from the more brutal “hard” authoritarianism associated with tyrannical regimes such as Nazi Germany and Stalin’s USSR. While infamous authoritarians, such as Stalin or Pol Pot, could compliment their cult of personality with the unfettered coercive power of the state, soft authoritarians are forced to grapple with adversarial democratic institutions that split and balance authority (Gandhi & Okar, 2009; Márquez, 2016, 2018; Schatz, 2009). In order to consolidate power, soft authoritarians must play a long game where they start by undermining these adversarial institutions until the institutions are too weak to resist the authoritarian’s bid for power (Cheibub et al., 2010; Gandhi & Okar, 2009; Márquez, 2016, 2018). The media is one adversarial institution that soft authoritarians must either degrade or coopt in order to consolidate power in themselves.** As Schatz (2009) notes, through “discursive preemption,” the soft authoritarian seeks to “maintain the upper hand in guiding the media to project images that strengthen his position” in a way that “may flirt with outright propaganda” but which maintains a veneer of transparency and legitimacy (207). For example, in 2005, Kazahki President Nazarbaev preempted charges of electoral fraud in his reelection with what appeared to be leaked documents showing that the opposition planned to allege fraud against the regime regardless, which in turn blunted the impact of the scandal (Schatz, 2011). By diluting public discourse with misinformation and false labels of inaccuracy, citizens lose faith in journalistic credibility (Freeze et al., 2020) and “no one can criticize power, because there is no basis upon which to do so” (Snyder, 2017, p. 65, 71**). Authoritarians then capitalize on growing distrust in institutions by promulgating their own salvation narrative, usually in defense of the “common man” (Schatz, 2009). Effective salvation narratives require the social amplification of a crisis, followed by blaming the “other” for the crisis and other problems that can stick (Waring, 2013; Waring & Glendon, 1998; Waring & Paxton, 2018). By controlling the media, authoritarians can deny wrongdoing, delegitimize their opponents and oppositional institutions (including traditional media outlets themselves), and spin a narrative that the state is sick. The only cure for this sickness, the authoritarian claims, is to trust in the leader and grant them the authority to set things straight (Svilicic & Maldini, 2014).**

#### Authoritarianism causes a laundry list of catastrophic impacts.

Kasparov and Halvorssen 17 [Garry Kasparov and Thor Halvorssen \*Chairman of the New York-based Human Rights Foundation \*\*Thor Halvorssen is the foundation’s president and chief executive. “Opinion: Why the rise of authoritarianism is a global catastrophe.” Washington Post. 2/13/17. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/democracy-post/wp/2017/02/13/why-the-rise-of-authoritarianism-is-a-global-catastrophe/>] Justin

Last month the world’s elite listened politely as Chinese President Xi Jinping offered the keynote address at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Of course, the leader of the Chinese dictatorship didn’t mention how he and his cronies jail and disappear human rights activists, persecute ethnic minorities and religious groups, and operate a vast censorship and surveillance system, among other evils. It is striking that a forum dedicated to “improving the state of the world” would offer such an important stage to the leader of a repressive regime. Xi began his remarks in part by asking “What has gone wrong with the world?” The fact is, he’s part of the problem. At present, the authoritarianism business is booming. According to the Human Rights Foundation’s research, the citizens of 94 countries suffer under non-democratic regimes, meaning that 3.97 billion people are currently controlled by tyrants, absolute monarchs, military juntas or competitive authoritarians. That’s 53 percent of the world’s population. Statistically, then, authoritarianism is one of the largest — if not the largest — challenges facing humanity. Consider the scale of some of the world’s other crises. About 836 million live under extreme poverty, and 783 million lack clean drinking water. War and conflict have displaced 65 million from their homes. Between 1994 and 2013 an annual average of 218 million people were affected by natural disasters. These are terrible, seemingly intractable problems — but at least there are United Nations bodies, aid organizations and State Department teams dedicated to each one of them. Dictators and elected authoritarians, by contrast, get a free pass. The World Bank bails out repressive regimes on a regular basis. There is no anti-tyrant U.N. task force, no Sustainable Development Goals against tyranny, no army of activists. We, the authors, have experienced the ills of authoritarianism personally. One of us has been beaten, blacklisted and forced into exile by operatives of the Kremlin. Russian President Vladimir Putin has relentlessly pushed to crush freedom of speech, brazenly annex Crimea and increase his global military activities in ways that hark back to the Cold War. The other author has seen his mother shot by Venezuelan security forces and his first cousin languish for nearly three years in a military jail as a prisoner of conscience. Today Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro runs a regime that regularly imprisons dissidents, abuses protesters and engages in such widespread graft and corruption that the country is now undergoing a catastrophic economic collapse. Putin and Maduro have co-conspirators in all parts of the world, fellow would-be tyrants who are dismantling the free press, jailing opponents, manipulating elections and committing a host of human rights violations. In Turkey, a once-promising democracy is gasping for air. Its president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, has shut down 149 media outlets, shuttered more than 2,000 schools and universities, fired more than 120,000 civil servants and jailed more than 45,000 suspected dissenters. In North Korea, Kim Jong Un rules the most totalitarian government on Earth, brainwashing 25 million people and terrorizing them with public executions, forced famines and a vast network of concentration camps that reminded U.N. investigators of Pol Pot’s Cambodia and Nazi Germany. And there are so many lesser-known dictators in countries such as Bahrain, Kazakhstan and Equatorial Guinea, where tyrants pilfer their countries’ natural resources and pocket the profits in private off-shore accounts. To cover their atrocities, they hire lobbyists, public relations firms and even policy groups in the free world to whitewash their actions. If injustice and oppression aren’t bad enough, authoritarian governments bear an enormous social cost. Dictator-led countries have higher rates of mental illness, lower levels of health and life expectancy, and, as Amartya Sen famously argued, higher susceptibility to famine. Their citizens are less educated and file fewer patents. In 2016, more patents were filed in France than in the entire Arab world — not because Arabs are less entrepreneurial than the French, but because nearly all of them live under stifling authoritarianism. Clearly, the suppression of free expression and creativity has harmful effects on innovation and economic growth. Citizens of free and open societies such as Germany, South Korea and Chile witness advances in business, science and technology that Belarusans, Burmese and Cubans can only dream of. And consider that free nations do not go to war with each other. History has shown this to be the only ironclad law of political theory. Meanwhile, dictators are always at war, often with a foreign power and always with their own people. If you are worried about public health, poverty or peace, your mandate is clear: Oppose tyranny. Tragically, world institutions and organizations have failed to properly address authoritarianism. Western governments sometimes protest human rights violations in countries such as Russia, Iran, and North Korea — but routinely ignore them in places such as China and Saudi Arabia, in favor of upholding trade deals and security agreements. The United Nations, established to bring peace and justice to the world, includes Cuba, Egypt and Rwanda on its Human Rights Council. Here, a representative from a democracy carries the same legitimacy as a representative from a dictatorship. One acts on behalf of its citizens, while the other acts to silence them. Between June 2006 and August 2015 the Human Rights Council issued zero condemnations of repressive regimes in China, Cuba, Egypt, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. Despite the fact that dictatorship is at the root of many global ills — poor health, failing education systems and global poverty among them — authoritarianism is hardly ever addressed at major conferences worldwide. And no wonder: Many, including the World Economic Forum and the now-defunct Clinton Global Initiative, receive ample funding from authoritarians. Few human rights groups focus exclusively on authoritarianism, and most establishment ones spend significant chunks of their budgets on criticizing democratic governments and their policies. Dictators are rarely in the spotlight. The noble struggle against tyranny has fallen upon individual activists and dissidents living under authoritarian rule or working from exile. Citizen journalists Abdalaziz Alhamza and Meron Estefanos found that few people in peaceful, free countries were interested in reporting on Syria and Eritrea, so they took it upon themselves to do so, despite the enormous danger this put them in. Hyeonseo Lee defected from North Korea to find that victims of sex trafficking in China are often abandoned and ignored, so she started pressuring the Chinese government herself. When Rosa María Payá’s father, Cuban democracy leader Oswaldo Payá, died in mysterious circumstances in 2012, it fell to her to demand a formal investigation and fair treatment for dissidents in Cuba. Such individuals are in constant need of support, because in their home countries there is no legal way to protest, no ACLU, no Washington Post and no opposition party to stand up for their rights. If authoritarianism and dictatorship are to be properly challenged — and if so many resulting crises, including military conflict, poverty and extremism, are to be addressed at their root cause — such dissidents need funding, strategic advice, technical training, attention and solidarity. To turn the tide against repression, people across all industries need to join the movement. Artists, entrepreneurs, technologists, investors, diplomats, students — no matter who you are, you can reach out to a civil society organization at risk and ask how you can help by using your knowledge, resources or skills. Today, authoritarians rule an increasingly large part of the globe, but the leaders of the free world lack the motivation and gumption to create a new U.N.-style League of Democracies. In the meantime, as individuals living in a free society, we believe it is our moral obligation to take action to expose human rights violations and to use our freedom to help others achieve theirs.

#### That culminates in rogue tech, nuclear war, and climate change.

Orts ’18 [Eric; June 27; Guardsmark Professor in the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania; LinkedIn Pulse, “Foreign Affairs: Six Future Scenarios (and a Seventh),” https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/foreign-affairs-six-future-scenarios-seventh-eric-orts]

7. Fascist Nationalism. There is another possible future that the Foreign Affairs scenarios do not contemplate, and it’s a dark world in which Trump, Putin, Xi, Erdogan, and others construct regimes that are authoritarian and nationalist. Fascism is possible in the United States and elsewhere if big business can be seduced by promises of riches in return for the institutional keys to democracy. Perhaps Foreign Affairs editors are right to leave this dark world out, for it would be very dark: nationalist wars with risks of escalation into global nuclear conflict, further digital militarization (even Terminator-style scenarios of smart military robots), and unchecked climate disasters.

The global challenges are quite large – and the six pieces do an outstanding job of presenting them. One must remain optimistic and engaged, hopeful that we can overcome the serious dangers of tribalism, nationalism, and new fascism. These "isms” of our time stand in the way of solving some of our biggest global problems, such as the risks of thermonuclear war and global climate catastrophe.

## Case

### FW

[1] Impact justified

[2] Fallacy of origin

CX

[3] Our fw is best of both worlds

### Climate

#### Facts can’t convince climate skeptics but advocacy can.

Spencer Bokat-Lindell 20 (Writer, NY Times) 1/2/2020, So You Want to Convince a Climate Change Skeptic, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/02/opinion/climate-change-deniers.html

Lead with values, not facts

If you want to convince someone about climate change, don’t lead with data, [writes Katharine Hayhoe](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/31/opinion/sunday/climate-change-evangelical-christian.html) in The Times. Dr. Hayhoe is a climate scientist at Texas Tech University, and she’s also an evangelical Christian, two identities she realized after moving from Canada were “supposed to be entirely incompatible” in the United States. Understanding why that’s the case is crucial when attempting to convert climate change skeptics, she writes, explaining:

It turns out, it’s not where we go to church (or don’t) that determines our opinion on climate. It’s not even our religious affiliation. Hispanic Catholics are [significantly more likely](https://www.pewforum.org/2015/06/16/catholics-divided-over-global-warming/) than other Catholics to say the earth is getting warmer, according to a 2015 survey, and they have the same pope. It’s because of the alliance between conservative theology and conservative politics that has been deliberately engineered and fostered over decades of increasingly divisive politics on issues of race, abortion and now climate change, to the point where the best predictor of whether we agree with the science is simply where we fall on the political spectrum.

In her experience, Dr. Hayhoe has found that the best way to neutralize the partisan charge on climate change is not by appealing to science — which some prominent Republicans, such as [Senator Ted Cruz](https://www.cnbc.com/video/2016/04/15/global-warming-a-religion-not-science-ted-cruz.html), have cast as a competitor to religion — but by emphasizing shared values. “For some, this could be the well-being of our community,” she writes. “For others, our children; and for fellow Christians, it’s often our faith.”

In such conversations, it may be important to remember how your interlocutor’s values differ from your own. In Vice, [Maggie Puniewska points to](https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/a3d35a/how-to-sway-a-climate-change-skeptic) the [moral foundations theory](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/25/books/review/the-righteous-mind-by-jonathan-haidt.html), according to which liberals and conservatives prioritize different ethics: the former compassion, fairness and liberty, the latter purity, loyalty and obedience to authority. Ms. Puniewska writes:

If you’re trying to convince someone who leans left, you can stick with the polar bear and keep tugging at their heart strings with talk of how unfair it will be to our children if the world is poisoned, but if you’re with a conservative, it’s wise to change up your approach — science has found that personalized climate-related messages work better.

For example, [research has found](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/295677478_Red_White_and_Blue_Enough_to_Be_Green_Effects_of_Moral_Framing_on_Climate_Change_Attitudes_and_Conservation_Behaviors) that conservatives are more likely to support a pro-environmental agenda when presented with messages containing themes of patriotism and defending the purity of nature.

#### Data proves.

University of Oregon, 5/27/21, Climate skeptics not easily persuaded by available evidence, now or later, <https://phys.org/news/2021-05-climate-skeptics-easily-evidence.html>

Climate skeptics who aren't persuaded by the existing evidence from climate change are unlikely to change their minds for many years, according to a newly published quantitative study by a University of Oregon environmental economist.

The central question posed by the study published in the journal Climate Change was "How much evidence would it take to convince skeptics that they are wrong?" The answer depended on the degree of skepticism. The study modeled two types of hypothetical skeptics—those who were less extreme and believed the change in temperature was slight, as well as more extreme skeptics who believed the change was nonexistent—and exposed them to climate data recorded between 1866 and 2005, as well as future projections until the end of the century.

"If a climate skeptic is unpersuaded by the evidence that is already available to them today, my model implies that they will likely remain a skeptic for many years into future," said author Grant McDermott, an assistant professor in the University of Oregon Department of Economics interested in the interaction between human and natural systems. "Why? Because it suggests their prior beliefs are so strong that even decades of continued warming may not be enough to convince them."

#### Republicans don’t care about citizens who want to act on Climate Change

Samantha Gross 21 (Director - Energy Security and Climate Initiative Fellow - Foreign Policy, Energy Security and Climate Initiative AT Brookings Institution)5/10/21, Republicans in Congress are out of step with the American public on climate, https://www.brookings.edu/blog/planetpolicy/2021/05/10/republicans-in-congress-are-out-of-step-with-the-american-public-on-climate/

A majority of Americans understand that climate change is a problem. A recent poll found that about six in 10 adults in the United States say the effects of global warming are already happening and a slightly greater proportion believe human activities are to blame for the Earth’s rise in temperature. Another study found that 65% of Americans believe that climate change is an emergency. Americans’ concern about climate translates into approval for action: 83% favor tax breaks for utilities that develop renewable power and 62% favor taxing companies for their greenhouse gas emissions. Such opinions are not just held among Democratic voters. A poll just before the 2020 election showed more than three-quarters of Republican voters favor government action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It’s not just the American people that are concerned about the climate and favor action. The American Petroleum Institute (API), a trade association that represents America’s oil and gas industry, announced in March 2021 a slate of actions that it favors to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including a price on carbon. Several large European oil and gas companies have set goals of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. U.S.-based companies generally haven’t taken this step, but several have come out in favor of a price on carbon emissions. Some skeptics believe that oil company support for carbon policy is cynical, an attempt to prevent even more onerous regulation or a ploy to protect investments in natural gas or carbon capture. But even if the shift is tinged with cynicism, it still provides an opening for conversation and policymaking. The U.S. financial industry is on board as well. The Climate Finance Working Group is made up of several trade associations for banks and financial institutions. In February 2021, the group issued a list of policy principals that would encourage financing for a low-carbon transition, including science-based policy in alignment with the Paris Agreement, long-term policy signals to foster innovation, and a price on carbon. Living and working in Germany for the past few months, I am frequently asked why U.S. greenhouse gas policy is behind Europe, when the United States will establish a price on carbon, and similar questions. The answer to those questions is Congress, where Republicans stand steadfast against serious legislation to deal with climate. Many Republicans legislators still reject the science of climate change, a position not held by other mainstream parties in democratic countries, but rising among far-right parties in Europe. Their positions have not kept up with their constituents, or even some business groups with which they are typically aligned. After the API made its announcement, Senator John Barrasso of Wyoming, the ranking Republican on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, issued a statement saying, “Proposals that impose a cost on carbon will hurt American families.” In April, Representative Scott Perry of Pennsylvania announced at a hearing of a subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee that he planned to introduce a bill to withdraw the United States from the United Nations Framework Commission on Climate Change. He introduced his bill, which has no chance of passing, on Earth Day. How did we get here? A total unwillingness to cooperate with Democrats is part of the problem. The polarized atmosphere in Washington is such that it is difficult for a Republican to support anything proposed by the Biden administration, lest they be demonized by right-wing media and the party’s activist base. A lack of honesty exacerbates this problem. Just in the last few days there was a flareup on the political right that President Joe Biden’s climate plan intended to severely limit Americans’ meat consumption. His plan said no such thing, but as the saying goes, a lie can travel around the world while the truth is lacing up its boots. The climate policies that Biden has proposed so far are a mix of executive action and proposals for Congress to fund climate-friendly investments. His American Jobs Plan includes encouragement for electric vehicle purchases and charging station construction, a clean electricity standard and tax credits for clean electricity development, and support for low-carbon industrial processes. He’s more focused on carrots than sticks, in part because carrots are easier to get through a skeptical Congress. Yet those policies are condemned by Republicans as “socialism.” “Our best future won’t come from Washington schemes or socialist dreams,” said Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina in response to President Biden’s first address to a joint session of Congress, on April 28. The situation of one political party out of step with a majority of the American people seems like an unsteady state, a disequilibrium that cannot hold. As an American concerned about climate and looking toward a low-carbon future, I wish that were so. But the Republican Party is sticking together in opposition. Although 57% of Republican voters support the American Jobs Plan, Republicans in Congress are saying no. The anti-majoritarian structure of the Senate gives the minority power to block legislation and require 60 votes for passage. Democrats can take advantage of their narrow control of the Senate to pass support for green investments through the budget reconciliation process, and perhaps afterward point out the popularity of the legislation among average Republicans. But in today’s tribal political environment, will it matter? Ultimately, hope for change among Congressional Republicans lies with voters, who say they care about climate, but haven’t made it a central issue determining their vote. Unless and until that changes, I fear that U.S. climate gridlock will continue.

### C1

#### PROPAGANDA IS STATE SPONSERED

Ferraro 20 (Matthew. Matthew F. Ferraro is an attorney and former U.S. intelligence officer, is a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a visiting fellow at the National Security Institute at George Mason Law School) Preston B. Golson, 3/24/2020, The Next Gray Zone Conflict: State-Based Disinformation Attacks on the Private Sector, <https://www.lawfareblog.com/next-gray-zone-conflict-state-based-disinformation-attacks-private-sector>

The story of RT’s attack on 5G is a glimpse of the near-future. Adversaries such as Russia, Iran and China look for ways to harass American interests without triggering all-out conflict. As trade wars proliferate, technological rivalries intensify, and multinational corporations take public positions on hot-button social issues, this form of “[gray zone conflict](https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/GrayZone_ExecSummary1_0.pdf)”—coercive actions that lie somewhere between diplomacy and warfare—will likely increase in scale and scope as competitors seek a strategic and economic advantage over the United States. American businesses will increasingly find themselves in the crosshairs of nation-state-sponsored disinformation operations. There are several reasons why. First, more and more countries have disinformation capabilities in their arsenal. According to a recent Oxford University report, [more than 70 countries](https://comprop.oii.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/93/2019/09/CyberTroop-Report19.pdf) have state-sponsored disinformation units. There’s no reason to think their targets will remain solely political. After all, economic interests have become further entangled with national interests. Economic espionage, state-sponsored hacks of private firms, and regulatory war over leading-edge technologies are all fixtures of current geopolitics. Disinformation attacks on the private sector are the next frontier in that conflict.

#### FREE PRESS EXCLUDES STATE CONTROL

Policinski 3/16 (Gene. Gene Policinski is a chief operating officer of the Freedom Forum Institute and of the Institute's First Amendment Center), 3/16/21, Opinion: There can be no American democracy without a free press, <https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/solutions/2021/03/16/there-can-no-american-democracy-without-free-press/4703141001/>

So, they provided for three branches of government to balance each other, along with periodic elections and the rights for us to assemble and seek change when we think things have gone astray. All fine, but also relatively long-term solutions. How do we know what our government is doing, how well it is operating or whether our elected officials are up to the job? Enter the only profession mentioned in the Constitution: A free press, to serve as a “watchdog on government.” A free press the government cannot control, to offer an independent, regular update on behalf of the rest of us.

Their evidence doesn’t agree – US advocacy vs actual media like univerisities – no solvency

Presume neg

### Solvency

#### 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.

Harding isn’t about media