

Introduction: How Trump Tested the Press, They Failed, and We Wonder, “Now What?”

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Abstract

This introduction outlines the overarching arguments made in the book, positions it within larger spheres of scholarship, and provides a brief analysis of the book’s sections and contributions.

Introduction: Problematizing the Trump Problem

He’s gone, but Donald Trump – and Trumpism – won’t easily leave or be forgotten.

It’s a bit too easy to use the phrase “post-Trump” when thinking of how we move forward in the years ahead, even as a new president has taken the helm and as Trump remains on the fringes of the political limelight. This term, “post-Trump,” is one we debated using for this volume. More than just meaning “after,” the term “post” is used to symbol that we have moved past, rejected, or normalized to the degree of making covert the influence and era of Trump. We thought it would be a good idea, particularly as the idea of “post-truth” has been a hot-button term used in Journalism Studies, particularly during the early days of Trump’s taking to the political scene. Though “post-truth,” scholars argued that due to politically motivated news, information, and social media messages that infiltrated audiences, complicated the authority of whose information could be taken seriously, and challenged the interpretations of mainstream, elite journalisms by proving “alternative facts,” the “truth” stopped mattering to some publics. Dis- and mis-information, lies, falsehoods, misleadings, and flak (Goss, 2019) had replaced the binary of what was or wasn’t a fact (for review, see Godler, 2020).

At some point, somewhere and someone complicated the notion of “post-truth” to adopt a more nuanced notion of just what that meant for everyday life and, especially, journalism and political communication (for review, see Gutsche, 2019a; 2019b). What then emerged was a massive push for scholars to adopt the ideas of mis- and dis-information in their discussions of Trump, his followers, and the challenges journalists face. It’s unclear where “post-truth” went in this new discussion exactly, as scholars and journalists worked to solidify that if it came to mainstream and elite journalism, anyway, that it was indeed true and the “post-truth” discussion didn’t really apply to journalism, but to information sources influencing the news. But before dis- and mis-information, we should note that notion and rhetoric of “fake news” presented by Trump and his team came into our view. He used this term on journalisms he didn’t like, but this also led the charge for scholars to move away from “fake news” for the same reason that “post-truth” just didn’t work for journalism; in their minds, there is no way mainstream, elite news could actually be fake. What we actually were talking about was mis-

and dis-information that appeared outside the realm of accepted journalism. This isn't to say that scholarship about "fake news" and "post-truth" is meaningless. These keywords – mis- and dis-information and "fake news" – become complicated by journalists and academics alike (Gutsche, 2019b; Tandoc, Lim, & Ling, 2018; Wardle, 2017).

There are few doubts that recent governmental elections in the U.S. and elsewhere have been subject to hacking, "outside" political influence, and fraud. And, there is equally no doubt that media users and producers are faced with increased pressures against their authority in a fragmented media landscape, one that through digital technologies is spreadable, marketable, and influential among communities of various political positions. Deep fakes, AI, social media, and a lack of scrutiny by audiences is an equal threat to the traditions and positions of "legitimate" mainstream media, not to mention the very lack of access to media itself that leads to what was rightly predicted to be a failure of technology to democratize (Hindman, 2009). Academics are doing a fine job marking their terrain in measuring the impact of "fake news" and information that's intentionally right or wrong, presenting to the world a common face of understanding that Trump was either a fluke, a result of hate-spewed rhetoric or of an uneducated and gullible voting bloc, or technology either gone overboard or misused and misunderstood by users. But these answers are too easy.

First, it's clear to me that we moved to the top-ranked work of today on journalism and "truthiness" through the current lens of mis- and dis-information, because neither term has anything to do with journalism itself, as though journalism is still the funnel for removing what's not "true" and certainly never created falsehoods of its own. You will find popular discussions of fakiness and bad-info clearly steering away from the notion that journalism itself is a construction of falsehoods, builds its own events, and works out explanations that are "true" to some and unrecognizable to others (Tischauer & Benn, 2019). And, second, we equally shouldn't put a lid on Trumpism by starting a term with "post." Not only would that be inaccurate, but it subjugates the current memories we have in which Trump is associated not with his followers, but also his interactions with the press that revealed much about power dynamics in how politics is identified, explained, and maintained through and by journalism.

What Trumpism (and journalism's explanations of and for it) brought to U.S. society through rhetoric, social policies, and racist and hyper-militarized policing was a spotlight of its own not shining only on the star, but shining on the sins of the nation, and an unveiling of power dynamics that have benefitted democratic institutions, including journalism since its conception and adoption that we try to maintain. With its focus on (white) America First and as a venue for conservatives who have felt slighted by national politics and media talking heads, Trumpism placed at the top of its priority lists debates and decisions desires for the expansion of the "safe" suburbs, policing of the "dangerous inner city," the economic/racialized/social prosperity of white families, the rule of the stock market and privatization, the removal of immigrants from U.S. jobs and lands, and the purity of the police. These are all things that mainstream journalism in the U.S. also strives for (e.g. French, 2016; González & Torres, 2011; Gutsche, et al., 2020).

Such ideas – nationalism, tribalism, exceptionalism, racism, patriotism, hyper-capitalism (in no particular order – are embedded in the very make-up of journalism’s focus on business and financial news, police and “law and order,” celebrations of U.S. military expansions that lead the free market and attacks on livelihoods and lives across the globe, and hegemonic maintenance of white supremacy in journalism classrooms and coverage of what happens in the geographies, availability, and options of voting. Maybe the problems are too big for journalism alone to tackle. Maybe journalists and their scholar friends are too afraid of advocacy journalism at the same time we have rejected normative interpretations of objectivity (the idea, not the practice) as revealing not just the dynamic shift in what journalism could look like if it advocated for social justice, but what problems it would reveal within the power dimensions of how journalism operates and what fallout could emerge ideologically for audiences who would see that their democracies, economies, social roles, and entertainment venues that they use to understand life are built like a house of cards. So, all of this is to say that we chose “After Trump” rather than “Post-Trump,” though I am sure you could argue “after” isn’t quite right, then, but we have to get Trump in the title somehow.

At this point, dear reader, you have either become overwhelmed by the pessimism and cynicism, you see these issues far too clearly and simply adopt the words on the page, or all of this sounds like a bunch of bullshit (we talk about this a bit below, too). Or, maybe there is a sense that these ideas are too far away from solutions. Or, maybe we have been trained to think that journalism can’t have anything to do with stopping murder by police, motivate military operations abroad (and increasingly, at home), or influence political gerrymandering that tries to block a sense of agency among voters while also physically manipulating where and how they are represented in government. I am with you. But, as you read these pages, I urge all of us to stop seeking solutions. Let’s just, first, see if we can agree on what the problems might be.

The desires and influences I have outlined here remain “After Trump,” so maybe that’s further justification for the term. At the center of this continuation amid the dismantling of the most unpopular Trump policies, the communicative and imaginative powers of the press are up for grabs. In this introduction, I outline some of the imaginaries and communication structures to set a tone for the remainder of the project’s offerings.

Is Journalism Better Yet?

Journalism, in the midst of its own decades-long battle with the internet for the capturing and retention of money and for legitimacy and relevance that saw rise during the times of satire journalism (Berkowitz & Gutsche, 2012; Gutsche, Naranjo & Martinez-Bustos, 2015) and the digital spread of access and platforms (e. g. Carlson, 2007) has had some of its toughest times as the target of Trump’s wrath. Journalism’s values and virtues have been defended by local and national reporters, educators, scholars, and public voices; yet, citizens increasingly have moved away from believing the press, in part because of mis- and dis-information plaguing social media channels, but also because of the political and philosophical pressures that shape their ideas and ideals of what America is, what it should be, why it wasn’t “great” when Trump took office, if and how it is “great again,” and if elite, mainstream media perpetuate or put

down ideas that citizens find resonate with their own ideas or that they find revolting. *The Future of the Presidency, Journalism and Democracy: After Trump* places these perspectives and tensions in one spot, focusing on the underlying ideological forces in tensions around media trust, Trumpism, and the role of journalism in it all. It is one of the first books to ask what life may be like without Trump front and center, particularly for journalism, but also for U.S. society.

The Future of the Presidency, Journalism and Democracy: After Trump follows the 2018 (2018a) (paperback in 2019).ⁱ That book was one of the first academic collections in Journalism and Media Studies to look at how Trump's rise to the presidency influenced journalistic norms, practices, political rhetoric, and discourse. Now, after Trump, this new book is a unique volume that extends scholarship about conventional and controversial aspects of how journalism covered (or didn't) communities that were either supportive or stricken down by Trump's rhetoric, that were proposed and implemented as policies, and that were ideas about what his presidency would bring to those who voted for him. And while books today about Trump abound, this project serves to reset discussions about journalism and Trump – not just to look back at what we got right or wrong in the field's initial research and practice. In this book, we wish to reshape the scholarly and public discourse about where we are going in terms of the presidency and publics, social media and journalism, with much of the work rooted in critical theory and Cultural Studies.

We hope this project will serve as a bookend of sorts, a way not just to reflect back *before or during Trump* but to be reflexive about the future, repositioning initial arguments through the developments of the past few years and into a new era that is riddled with remnants of what led to the 2016 election of Donald Trump and the 2020 election that showed not as much a windfall for change, but a deeper divide within U.S. society. At the center of this change: journalisms, the roles of fake news and social media, an influx of mis- and dis-information, media fragmentation, normalization of hate speech, the rise of the Right-wing, escalated violence against U.S. Blacks and African Americans by their own government through public-supported policing, and social action that supports social justice. It's a long list that's not nearly complete, and no one could have guessed the daily disruptions the Trump Presidency brought for journalists, citizens, and academics that we are still trying to understand in these pages, especially if and when the popular journalism scholars of today refuse to complicate matters through critical interpretations of journalisms'ⁱⁱ collusive powers (for more on such complications, on what I use to consider the notion of collusion, see Cook 2005; Freedman, 2014; Gutsche, 2015; Janeway, 1999; Jones, 2015; Mills, 2016).

The Future of the Presidency, Journalism and Democracy: After Trump tries to take a breath and capture these contestations, movements, and moments surrounding (or that are only identified for discussion – especially those that question collusion – because of Trump's tie) while they are in recent collective media memory and when a country and its multiple collectives attempt to understand (for forget) our social conditions that got us here, that remain, and that are more foundational than we would like to admit. More directly connected to this project before your eyes and in a way I am sure we as scholars in these pages are in agreement is an interest in the

degree to which or potential that journalism has come to turn to “trust” and “truth” to counter challenges of “bias” and elitism of the media and an often-uncomplicated embrace by industry of promises of social media and technologies to save them. Of courses, one can’t downplay the influence of computers on journalism as much as we can’t discount COVID-19, a global pandemic, and its own impact on discussions surrounding politics and the press. We don’t. That said, the snapshots of where journalism is today and where it may be heading (and why) can’t be overshadowed or led to distraction. This project represents many a perspective counter to what is done on journalism during Trump, digging deep at the salient influences of race and fear and resistance and agency.

Indeed, there is an argument to be made that journalism merely covered what Trump put out and that as politics will, or already has, made a “return to normal.” So will journalism, the idea goes, and we have seen a return to “normal” within the easy days of Joe Biden’s press coverage (Gutsche, 2020a), where journalists take a seat, the authorities speak, and the journalists report. For those who need stats for this simplification, but also for those who like context, there is this from Pew (2021) about press coverage in Biden’s First 100 Days:

Overall, 32% of stories about the Biden administration had a negative assessment, while 23% had a positive one and 45% were neither positive nor negative. But those numbers varied widely by types of media outlets. Fully 78% of the stories from outlets with predominantly right-leaning audiences carried a negative assessment. That stands in stark contrast to the 19% of stories with a negative assessment from outlets with left-leaning audiences and about a quarter of stories (24%) from outlets with a mixed audience.

Not sure how something is “neither positive or negative,” and much of this, again, has to do with what position the research takes on what is considered a “positive” and a “negative,” a “neutral” or a “nothing-to-see-here.” But, there has been some critical journalism on such things as Biden’s troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, which went less than well, even by the Democrat’s Darling *New York Times* (Aikins, Koettl, Hill, & Schmitt, 2021).ⁱⁱⁱ But even today, as I write this, the *Times* still fits its mold not just of “liberal bias” but of its ideological bias the elevates Capitalism and makes it synonymous with American patriotism, and as it pushed to war through sport metaphor (Lule, 2004) applies the same with its news analysis of Biden’s COVID-19 approach, writing, “Biden’s New Vaccine Push Is a Fight for the U.S. Economy” (Tankersley, 2021). The piece, on the top of the newspaper’s homepage, reads like a sports story about Biden’s quarterback play against the virus:

President Biden’s aggressive move to expand the number of vaccinated Americans and halt the spread of the Delta variant is not just an effort to save lives. It is also an attempt to counter the continuing and evolving threat that the virus poses to the economy.

Delta’s rise has been fueled in part by the inability of Mr. Biden and his administration to persuade millions of vaccine-refusing Americans to inoculate themselves against the virus. That has created another problem: a drag on the economic recovery. Real-time

gauges of restaurant visits, airline travel and other services show consumers pulled back on some face-to-face spending in recent weeks.

After weeks of playing down the threat that a new wave of infections posed to the recovery, the president and his team blamed Delta for slowing job growth in August. “We’re in a tough stretch,” he conceded on Thursday, after heralding the economic progress made under his administration so far this year, “and it could last for a while.”

Think this is that different than that take by conservative press? Only in terms of whether Biden is the team favorite. Take this top story from Newsmax (2021) on the same morning, headlined, “Amid a Few Cheers, Many Worries as Businesses Face Biden’s Vax/Test Mandates,” which starts off with:

Big names in Corporate America including Amazon.com Inc cheered President Joe Biden as he mandated employees either get vaccinated or be tested regularly at businesses with 100-plus employees [sic]. But some midsize companies worried that the plan would be tough to carry out and unpopular with many workers.

Earlier on Thursday, Biden took aim at vaccine resistance in America, announcing policies requiring most federal employees to get COVID-19 vaccines and large employers to ensure their workers are vaccinated or tested weekly.

...

Much of Corporate America was silent as it digested the news. A few household names such as Amazon supported Biden, and Microsoft Corp and Facebook Inc said they already required vaccines for those entering U.S. offices.

But some midsize companies worried about losing employees at a time when they are trying to grow business.

...

Jay Baker, president of Jamestown Plastics in Brocton, New York, offered a succinct assessment. “I think it’s bull----.”

“I’m not a fan of the federal government mandating anything,” he said. “This is not the bubonic plague. This is not typhoid - and they seem to be treating it like it is.”

In both articles – the *Times* and Newsmax – the focus is on the economy. Maybe that makes sense. We all need paychecks and safe working environments, and in our Capitalist society and economy, jobs are important. And despite that one source (the *Times*) places Biden in a “field general role” comprised of both playing a high-stakes game and fighting to save lives, Newsmax similarly spoke of “cheers” from a grandstand of corporate America for Biden’s role and policy

but also provides voices from the crowd that positions the article as anti-governmental involvement in individual health-related matters, such as getting vaccinated. The differences in political positioning aside (pro- or anti-Biden), that the economy dominated the discussion on both sites, positioned a sports-centered feel as the means of explaining the Economy v. COVID-19, and focusing on a geographic center of New York and Washington, D.C., these snapshots represent prevalent practices of journalism, those that are narrow political means of covering today's issues.

These, of course, were not the only stories of the day from either site, nor are they that different from what appeared in (mainstream) local newspapers that morning of September 10, 2021, in the U.S.

- Low voter turnout for local elections in Birmingham and Mobile, Alabama, that a local resident was one of those lost at the Pentagon in the events of 9/11, and how COVID-19 hospitalizations were dropping in the area led the pages of the *Press-Register* in Southwest Alabama.
- New COVID-19 deaths and hospitalizations, a local suspected of “killing another in homeless encampment,” a photograph from a funeral on the other side of the country for a soldier killed “while helping to screen Afghans and others trying to flee” Afghanistan following the U.S. military there led the *The Bellingham Herald* (Washington).
- A new law that allows for early Sunday sales of alcohol, the opening of a new store that sells “western modern boutique items”, and Bidens’ plans for nationwide vaccines and tests were Page One news in the *The Dickinson Press* in Dickinson, North Dakota.
- The building of a new bridge, “tensions” at a local rezoning hearing for a new hospital bed tower, a downtown revitalization project getting public feedback, and that a local hospital “halted” patient visits due to the pandemic were featured on the cover of the *Waterdown Daily News* Upstate New York.
- A local providing aid to Haiti following a deadly earthquake there, the city receiving \$13 million in federal funds to “recover” from COVID-19, a murder trial, and how a local academic is helping his own family members leave Afghanistan were on the cover of the *Arizona Daily Sun* in Flagstaff, Arizona.^{iv}

Despite the rise in metrics, search, and algorithms to capture, tell, and measure what people consume, the capturing of newspapers’ front pages still provides a glimpse at some journalism look like (Bell & Coche, 2020). So, is *this* what journalism is, the age-old agenda-setting model of telling local communities what is important in terms of government, military, the “civicness” of voting and economy? I can see why people are tired of the news. Patterns of economic-focused stories that normalize and maintain the hiding of corporate greed through narratives of corporate exceptionalism and “investment,” of economies providing for the human race rather

than the human race providing for the human race (often at the cost of other ecosystems and species), of work shouldn't mean that this is what journalism is – or should be. At the same time that the public focus remains on real (read, legitimate) concerns on providing for our families and our futures, we have lost something by not demanding that journalism investigates (and not just through investigative journalism, where our minds immediately turn) to deeper meanings and interactions of and with power, the contestation of intellectualism within which journalism finds itself in both practice and scholarship about it (McDevitt, 2020).

The social impact of anti-intellectualism in journalism has real (read, again, legitimate) implications. Here in the U.K., for instance, the National Health Service (NHS) has been purposely defunded to the degree that the normal wait for an emergency room appointment is *hours* and was – even pre-COVID-19. Basic surgeries are being cut from the list of what the NHS covers, cancer patients are dying because of a lack of access to care, ambulance response times can be in the hours, and NHS workers themselves are losing money based on a salary that hasn't kept up with the impact of inflation for decades. But media here, which skews widely based on ideological and socio-political spectra, didn't waste a minute distracting the public from the issues at hand, foremost that of austerity.

When the pandemic spread across the U.K., citizens were asked by their government and encouraged their media to praise the “heroes of the NHS,” the front-line workers (for critical review, see Wood & Skeggs, 2020), at least once a week. These public “thank yous” included clapping sessions, where people stood outside their homes with pots and pans that they would bang and make other noises to show their thanks for all healthcare workers were doing. In my neighborhood, the noise would go on for about three minutes and then silence would prevail for another seven days. In the meantime, journalists highlighted the social function of shaming, boosting people to call-out their neighbors who weren't to be distracted (or bothered, or “arsed” as they say here in the North) to punch a pan in this public pandering.

At the same time, many of these same clapping citizens would be cheering the U.K.'s January 2021 exit from the European Union, known as Brexit – a racist and isolationist move that was needed, in part it was said, to help the government keep money it would otherwise send out of the country and use it for domestic for institutions, such as the NHS. (Ironically, the week I am writing this, the government told us that they would increase taxes to help fund intentional shortfalls in the funding of the health service and its keyworkers [BBC, 2021a], making one wonder where the “savings” from Brexit are going. That's someone else's book, though.)

From my experience, there was little to no coverage of Brexit's impact on everyday life beyond markets and trading, movement of millions, and what the future could look like. The news often focused, as well, on when it would happen, the exit delayed, and deadlines pushed. Little did people know that a year later, while cancer treatment equipment, deep freezers and other household electronics, would be locked at the customs border or that placed like McDonald's would run out of milkshakes, and that the NHS would be bled dry of plastic vials for taking blood, a combination of global economics, local workforce, and national border control outcomes connected to Brexit. But, before that happened in the summer of 2021, 2020 was

spent creating a never-ending cycle of and for COVID-19 news. And no one was doing anything about journalism that was taken over by COVID-19 news, bypassing social ills and solutions, problems, and other pandering that just didn't need to happen, because *everything* that wasn't just right was blamed on poor COVID-19. Part of the 2020 distraction from politics in the U.K. and the pending doom of Brexit was the performance of 99-year-old Captain Tom Moore, a military veteran, who walked in his back yard round and round to raise £32 million for NHS Charities in the middle of its pending financial collapse. As a side note: Maybe Tom was so famous because people thought he was Major Tom from David Bowie's "Space Oddity," but I argue not elsewhere (Gallagher, 2021).

Tom died in February 2021 from a COVID-19-related illness after breaking social norm and travel rules to exit the country for a family vacation in Barbados, paid in part by British Airways who flew them there. Before then, he had been elevated by media and government alike in a form of COVID celebrity celebration (BBC, 2021b). According to one article about Tom's trek to the top:

The impact of Captain Tom's effort, on the media and popular culture in the first half of 2020, cannot be overstated. He was given an RAF flypast; awarded a gold Blue Peter badge; named GQ magazine's "inspiration of the year"; made an honorary colonel and honorary doctorate; given a Pride of Britain award; became the first member of the FA's Lionhearts squad (after a special visit from David Beckham no less); had a number one single with Michael Ball; smashed two Guinness World Records; launched a gin range; was unveiled as a new portrait at the National Army Museum; and drew Her Majesty out of isolation for a knighthood ceremony at Windsor. (Gallagher, 2021)

Goodbye, Capt. Tom.

So, to recap – COVID-19-as-scapegoat and a real threat, the pending doom of Brexit, a poisoned NHS, Captain Tom celebrity to distract from NHS defunding, and Donald Trump. You can't make up this shit. OK, so while Trump wasn't such big news in the U.K. at the time, there certainly was his influence in our own daily news briefs and in the motivation that his rhetoric and politics and approaches had upon government leaders here. In the moment when these synergistic effects were taking place, journalism was at the center, loving every minute of the attention and ratings and the chance to take on audiences and rampant "mis-" and "dis-information" to build their authority, as they did with fake news in years prior (Cushion, Morani, Kyriakidou, & Soo, 2021; Gutsche, 2018b; Nielsen, Kalogeropoulos, & Fletcher, 2021)

To some, the connections I am making in this chapter, particularly about power, will never make sense. To others, they will be deemed as too simplistic. What about, though, if we complicate the Capt. Tom story a bit more by marking his media spectacle as being the result of the media rights to his tale by then-Piers Morgan's *Good Morning Britain* airing that the show's owner, ITV, replayed over and over again with the channel capitalizing on their stories' footage that they owned and the overarching war-hero-turned-COVID-hero narrative (yes, he marched in his uniform) that also led to Tom's knighting by the Queen? Media-entertainment-

government/monarchy industry, anyone, that still left the media/entertainment and government/monarchy off the hook for the demise of the NHS through narratives, policies and explanations sought and provided to audiences, the anti-Asian rhetoric that spread through the U.K. during COVID-19, and the narratives that elevate military worker grunts into Joseph Campbell's "Hero?"

Now, what if we complicate our Tom tale more by telling you that Tom's daughter-in-law was a marketing guru in her own right that promoted his story through emotion, triggering, visual and social media storytelling, social currency, and herd mentality? Not everything is as it seems. And, more importantly, and sadly, is that in the whole narrative of the fight against COVID-19 that Tom led us away from seeing in the U.K. is that in addition to (or, cough, instead of) healthcare workers and the NHS itself being the heroes, those who live in a society that wish (and pay in their taxes) for "socialized" healthcare, such as in the U.K. are the real (yes, legitimate) heroes. If that were the story, what then? It would be a sports battle between the government defunding the very thing that the public had built and says it fights for. What a narrative that would be. Could we do the same in the U.S. context? What narratives could we change?

[Intentional Space Added]

This edited collection, to varying degrees, takes some of these idea into account in its tone and tenor of the Trump Presidency and journalism "afterward." One aspect all chapters share is that we must not ignore the veils of power that have been unveiled by Trump that show how journalists work (and where they work) in terms of determining what geographies (physical and ideological) are covered in political reporting, but also what messages are heard. Trump, and perhaps more so his political and public supporters, have left an imprint on U.S. politics and political journalism that is both deep and wide. His behavior, policies, social media presence, language, and ability to curry favor with wide swaths of conservatives in the U.S. might have been his alone, but we must remember the presidency is not just a person, it is an institution.

[Placing Blame v. Complicating Context: Our Society Today](#)

There was an infrastructure ahead of Trump that allowed for his policies to be implemented, and these infrastructures didn't leave when he did, a problem that must be addressed (and accepted) for journalists, scholars, citizens, and students if they wish to make change. Trump – and the institution of the Presidency – reshaped the very practice and presentation of U.S. political journalism, at least for the time being. Journalism has become more partisan, predictive, and profitable, yes. And, on its own, journalism as an institution has taken to become the arbiter of truth that must be open to constant evaluation about what they consider "right" and "wrong" based on social outcomes, not what's popular at the moment.

After Trump, which is calm and clear and bright and positive (well, compared to the daily grind that was Trump news) one must ask how "watchdog" the press will be over the nation's next leaders, particularly those not as overt as Trump in their meanings or emotions, policies and practices, believes, and bullshitting. One of the ways Joe Biden has survived in his first year in

office is, in part, because of the way he played throughout the end of the 2020 campaign – largely staying silent. That doesn't bode well for the public to find out just what he's thinking and doing. How journalists cover social and political issues in the U.S. will remain influenced by the actions of the people's government – not just one man (or woman) – has taken against members of the press and the public in the past, from both sides of the aisle:

- The anti-Trump, Barack Obama, didn't like journalists either, and he spied on them, too (Timm, 2021).
- Obama was named "The Deporter-in-Chief" for his record removal of immigrants from U.S. shores (NPR, 2017).
- Non-white citizens have long been subject to presidential-level racist policies and the blind eye of the Oval Office on issues of race embedded in U.S. society (Grigsby Bates, 2020).

Journalism, ever the explainer of the everyday, not just has to cover the news of the day, but has to explain the news in context, something that it struggled to do during the days of Trump. That lack of context helps, though, if we wish to return to times pre-Trump that we consider were really much better. If we do not wish to move beyond Trump in ways that can make journalism better (Gutsche, 2018c), then ignore this context. It will be a repeat of the Trump Show in which the moment operates in a vacuum and the audience sucked into a single, dominant ideology of mainstream, elite journalism. Will a bit on the Trump Days help provide context so we can try to change things? If so, read on.

The Trump Press Scene: A Reminder

James Fallows, in *The Atlantic* in September 2020, took on what journalists missed before November 2016 and that he said continued to miss throughout Trump's entire presidency. "Many of our most influential editors and reporters are acting as if the rules that prevailed under previous American presidents are still in effect," Fallows writes. "But this president is different; the rules are different; and if it doesn't adapt, fast, the press will stand as yet another institution that failed in a moment of crucial pressure." In short, Fallows argues in his piece that journalists failed to "take sides" (advocate) for anti-racism in their coverage, particularly when that racism was coming directly from Trump's mouth, or labeling things "lies" or "facts" if they are or aren't.

Trying to maintain a status-quo in reporting by not moving away from the norms (don't worry this would make the U.S. press more Left; it is already living in the Right) maintained Trump's rise, strengthened the resolve of his supporters, and made us of all blind to the deeper issues of our society and the ways in which our corporations, entertainment enterprises, cultural revolutions of conservatives, and the influence of often-times rushed and reductionist daily journalism in local communities is making us rot from the inside out. Taking out Trump in journalism became the focus of decisions and reporting that normalized just what Fallows was

asking for, naming racism and lies when they appear (for an example of some action taken, see Evans, 2019), but only seemingly when it came to Trump – not Biden or local news events, city council decisions, school board decisions, and other news events and issues where calling something as it is would lead to uncomfortable pushback by publics, advertisers and sources.

A massive hit to traditional political journalism marking a moment that changed everything (at least while Trump was in office), occurred in 2017 when the White House announced it would stop, or at the least greatly reduce, daily press briefings at the White House. What were journalists to do!? This not only immediately threatened the performative power (see Gutsche & Hess, 2019) of journalists who rely on their pressers to showcase their skills and their “being there-ness” that contributes to their authority and legitimacy (for more, see Reich & Godler, 2017). When journalists thought this would correct itself after Trump’s tantrums exit, Biden did lead to the return of the briefings on a regular schedule but he, himself, remained absent from the press until he was forced into it, particularly surrounding his withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan in September 2021. But even before then, there was trouble, with journalists complaining the new president was just too boring (Meek, 2021).

Trump’s involvement of outside-Washington (read, conservative) reporters and voices into the briefing room (see Gutsche, 2018a) when briefings happened during his initial months in office were not just a reflection of the tensions of socio-politics in the U.S. – that Washington press are too far Left and focused on insider-political reporting – but were an early hint of just how else he would fight his battle with the press beyond name-calling. He was shutting them out. This practice was extended as a norm throughout the presidency until the COVID-19 crisis in 2020 when they resumed daily discussions from the press room. The rationale for Trump and others staying away from press gaggles was to silence journalists and control the message, something Trump also did with his incessant tweeting since he first took to a political podium.

Trump even liked to ditch convention by, allegedly, writing his own social media posts, even at 4 a.m., and sidetracking official spokespeople. “President Trump thinks like he’s his own press secretary and he’s the one that ought to be the spokesman every day, and I’m not even sure he likes the idea he’s got someone called the spokesman or a press secretary,” Mike McCurry, who was a press secretary to President Bill Clinton, told journalists in 2018 (NPR, 2018). Press Room press conferences, a long tradition that provided daily visual updates to journalists, feeding their stories (both those that might be breaking news and evergreens that journalists build over a longer period of time), became a chance for Trump to interject onto the scene more ideologically conservative and local reporting.

When that just didn’t work or wasn’t a good optic for him and his press secretaries, he took to Twitter and impromptu pressers, keeping journalists scrambling and, in effect, distracted from going deeper into his comments and tweets, the stories they are paid to investigate or scrutinize. Essentially kicking out the press (sadly, and unacceptably, this, too, happened during Trump’s time) contributed to a missed opportunity for journalists to abandon conventional forms of political reporting and return to nationwide news as they did once, with the pages of national newspapers and cable news reports including environmental reporting from Colorado,

innovative school practices in New York City, airport expansions, and stories of “contemporary America,” the stories I loved to write for *The Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, and elsewhere. That was journalism, too.

Toward the end of Trump’s tenure, journalists took to the first solution, though – abandonment but only after *years* of reporting his every word, hate-filled and not. When journalists decided to not cover his tweets, to not air his speeches (even cutting off mid-speech) it was too late, and just too silly (Lyons, 2020). Equally, when Facebook and Twitter decided to ban the man (despite being private companies that do not need to adhere to the First Amendment, an argument that is a bit tricky, though, when the companies are so in-bed with government searches of people’s data, relay governmental messages, and play host to the outputs of politicians and government agencies), one must ask how these acts are of collective forgetting that now make these decisions overshadow the past free-for-all that harmed “democracy.”

I even advocated for “dumping Trump” from the media in 2020 (Gutsche, 2020b):

The solution, for now, may just be for the media to dump Trump, take a minimal hit for ignoring his antics, and spend their time returning to what made journalism good in the first place (enter a bit of nostalgia here): storytelling about everyday life, investigations into wrongdoings, and news coverage that is diverse and global, coming from all parts of the US and the world to unveil ill - but in doing so, bring us back together.

My concern and desire wasn’t and isn’t that we just shouldn’t listen to Trumpish nonsense, but that we seemed to be OK with what Trump was saying from even very early on in his political time, particularly when it was race-based (see Gutsche, 2018a, p. 2). Why didn’t we stop it then?

Even as *The Washington Post* Fact Checker became a household name during the Trump era – it had been working for a decade prior, but, again, for insider-insider politics – others were collecting Trump’s comments, perhaps simply because we couldn’t believe he said some things he did, but also because they became a type of Bible upon which to stand as a collective against Trump. Amy Siskind, an activist, writer, and organizer of the 2019 We the People March in Washington, D.C., published a 507-page book, *The List: A Week-by-Week Reckoning of Trump’s First Year*. In it, she literally list even the most banal moments. Some are better than others. She also numbers them. From June 2017 on pages 169 and 170:

- 74. “CNBC reported that the Trump regime is touting the creation of coal jobs that might not actually exist.”
- 77. “Frustrating House Republicans, Trump called their version of the VHCA/Trumpcare – which he had celebrated in the Rose Garden – “mean,” and said he hoped the Senate would pass a better version.

- 85. In an early sign of cracks from unfilled key roles in the executive branch, after the USS *Fitzgerald* collision, Trump was criticized by Brandon Friedman, a former Obama administration official, for leaving the positions of U.S. Navy secretary and ambassador to Japan unfilled.

What?

This is how crazy Trump made people that they literally had to mark down everything that happened. Siskind isn't arguing this is journalism, but *The Post's* Fact Checker did something similar – collecting and counting Trump's lies. OK, so Siskind's book cover also carried the following text that “[e]xperts in authoritarianism advise to keep a list of things subtly changing around you, so you'll remember.” So maybe it's the thought that counts. But journalism just keeps pouring out the same old stuff, obfuscating power relations by scapegoating. In this case, the scapegoat was ... wait for it ... Trump.

Around the same time that book came out, in September 2018, after resettling “across the pond” from the United States to England, I decided to take up public writing about journalism and Donald Trump. I had already edited my first Trump book about the tense relationships between the White House and the press earlier in the year and with several months away from the classroom to share welcoming my first son with my wife, I hadn't really spoken about Trump too much outside of my own research. As I settled in, *The Washington Post* and Watergate journalist Bob Woodward published a book about the wacky and dangerous behavior and policies that had become daily and commonplace during the Trump Administration since he took office in January 2017.

Fear: Trump in the White House (2018) was called “best-selling” before it hit the shelves, and *The Conversation*, an academic blog that sometimes has its works republished in mainstream media, asked me to write my thoughts about it. My take was two-fold: First, I asked in this piece, where “we really need[ed] to hear more about Donald Trump's behaviour? What is there that we don't already know? And what has anyone, including the media, done with this knowledge anyway?” My argument surrounded the fact that, following countless news reports and the book *Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House* (Wolf, 2018) that came out just months before in January 2018, coupled with Woodward's own controversial background, namely that he seems to write insider-politics for his own image and not really to break open the workings and culture of Washington politics and journalism, one should wonder if what we would be reading in his latest account could truly constitute a meaningful telling of policies, personalities, and practices. I wrote:

... the book comes on the heels of more than a dozen related titles by journalists this year alone. And they all tackle the same topics: misogyny, xenophobia, racial hatred, corporate greed. They are all based on personal experiences and stories of those whose names should not be mentioned. They all pretty much tell us the same thing: that Trump is a cruel, inept and unfit president. What more is there to know about him, and do we really want or need to know? (Gutsche, 2018d)

More importantly, I questioned whether the book mattered in terms of identifying the trials and tribulations of journalism that led to Trump's rise. Journalism, I posted, "should also be under scrutiny for celebrating the very kind of salacious 'insider journalism' that Woodward's latest work exemplifies."

My main concerns in that article, where I criticize Woodward for his previous books – especially the 2002 *Bush at War* that bowed to President George W. Bush and his handling of the 9/11 attacks, which "was based on unnamed sources and lengthy private conversations with Bush himself" – was that:

[t]he implications of Woodward's "deep background" methodology are often glossed over by journalists and journalism scholars. Instead of being interrogated on the ethical issues deep background work presents regarding the identity of sources and how Woodward got to them, it is simply accepted as the price that must be paid for juicy detail.

These types of journalistic tactics aren't much criticised by the mainstream press, and it's even given a pass to use them by the political sources it uses. It's simply part of doing business. In fact, such sources apparently like being on background not only to protect their identities, but because having secrets to leak is a mark of their power in Washington.

To me, this was a fairly banal assessment, but one that was a bit different from all of the other reports that basically sold Woodward's book as shocking and the epitome of journalism. So, while I rarely read comments to any blog post I make – they either make me angry, laugh with disdain, or make no sense – in this case I took a look. Only one stood out as calm, rational, but completely missing the point of the post. The author wrote:

This book catalogues, from an acknowledged master of journalism, a horrifying descent into darkest American polarization. The author's dismissive tone does not do justice to the accolades that Woodward has accrued.

Sadly, my arguments were lost on our dear reader. By referring to Woodward as "acknowledged master of journalism" and to the nation's trajectory as "a horrifying descent into darkest American polarization," the commenter represents the even-keeled approach of today's single-minded Trump-haters. I found the mention of the "dismissive tone" especially ironic. The post wasn't about Donald Trump. It was about Bob Woodward, and I was pretty clear about not dismissing his influence in creating a prized-based, celebrity journalism culture in which the journalist markets herself to today. But The Conversation commentator, perhaps without knowing it and with a own tone that was fairly light and airy in this political climate, actually marked out the landscape that scholars and commentators follow today that I highlighted: Demonize Trump and celebrate journalists.

Yet what of the people who want to understand Trump and critique and criticize the press? Simply put, we aren't so popular. Even in talking with colleagues about this very book, they have had a hard time setting aside just how much they hate Donald Trump to look at the larger landscape. That shortsightedness can't be good for scholarship, journalism, or society. But little has been done since Trump took and left office by any major institution to fix the problems that got the country to elect him in the first place that I mention above but highlight here again:

- Domestic police forces, fueled by the U.S. international war machine, continue to be hyper-militarized with little chance they will give up their army-grade guns and tanks, even with the "defund" campaigns of 2020 that called not to disband police (though that might be a good idea in some instances) but to reduce their stronghold of physical force, particularly in non-white communities (Katzenstein, 2020).
- White cops were caught murdering innocent blacks during Obama's time, too (Wright, 2016). Schools continued to get shot-up by people armed with military grade weapons, and little, meaningful alterations were made to gun laws that helped us put racist white people in jail for gun violence. Instead, we focused even more on jailing Black and other dark-skinned citizens who sometimes, honestly, needed guns to defend themselves in some geographies not only from each other, but from police who prey on these places and people.
- The Electoral College that consistently votes in the presidential candidate other than the one selected by the popular vote is still around, and that doesn't seem to be going anywhere (Prokop, 2016). Any discussion of getting rid of that is muted after each presidential election, as we are too tired to think about politics anymore for a while. And, bringing up the removal of the College mid-term could lead to political consequences even for the party that is in power.
- Local and state governments continue to disinvest in their local services, including education, environmental protection, and efforts to reduce unfair jailing practices, police violence, institutional racism, and privatization of everyday public assistance (Harris, 2020). At the same time, the federal government undermines the autonomy and the symbolic power of the U.S. postal system – raging for decades before Trump and that proved to be a vital asset in the 2020 election as voters needed the service to mail in their votes mid-pandemic – and still operates to maintain control over its citizenry through racist housing policies, standardized and culturally insensitive testing in its educational programs, and under-funded health care plans. In each of these – development, education, and health care – privatization grows while individual and household economic divides widen, unable to avail themselves of opportunity.

Just a few more, if it's OK. It's important, I think, to see what's underlying in our society that has become far too obsessed with the personality and sensationalism of the Trump White House not to remove responsibility from that man and his supporters, but to show what each citizen is

wrapped-up in, social and cultural contestation that we rarely hear about in media and everyday discussions that aren't also mired in emotional, political rants. Here we go:

- While Blacks continue to die in gun violence that's not as popular as those suburban school shootings, but that are formed by unequal economic systems, violence against non-whites intensified by government agencies such as the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency that funnel violence and threats of raids in largely Spanish-speaking regions of our country (cite). Indeed, as Trump and others in the GOP used immigration as a mainstay of their campaigns, particularly in the 2016 election and as a overtone to much of the policies of the Trump administration, ICE has become a terrorist cell of its own, holdings jurisdiction within 100 miles of any U.S. border. To visualize this, the border where ICE can work stretched from both side of Florida, encapsulating the entire state. The border also consists of land that's halfway across the states of California, Wisconsin, Louisiana, and most of the states along the Eastern Seaboard (ACLU, n.d.).
- Guantanamo Bay is still running. Obama said he would close that, but it never happened. Biden doesn't seem to be doing it, either, though as of this writing small steps are being made to move detainees, though where they are held (but that they are held) isn't really the point (Ali, 2021).
- Infrastructure, such as bridges and roads, are still crumbling, though Trump told us that fixing them was one of his aims when he ran for office. We will see if Biden's funds will go into actually fixing our aging nation and if politicians will even maintain support for the project (Democrats and Republicans), as they nearly stalled final attempts to pass legislation and funding in 2021 (Zhang, 2021).
- And, the very social fabric that we said we used to rely on to bring us together as one nation still doesn't exist, leaving us growing ever more fragmented and frustrated (Putnam, 2020).

It is ironic I write these words on the 20th anniversary of the events of 9/11 when the nation calls for unity and Americanness, using the media to reflect upon the events of that day without reflecting on the media as lacking context as to why the events even happened both then and now (Gutsche, 2021), I must say I hope we can do better reflecting on Trumpism and journalism's roles in it.

Outline of Book

There is no record anywhere that the authors of this book share all of my sentiments above. I merely reflect on their work and wish to politicize the project to aim toward critical interpretations of a field I have worked in and now teach and research. Here, I present and connect the chapters in the book's sections.

The project opens with an analysis of the current politics of fear in the U.S. that became tantamount to Trump's presidency, motivated by collective moral panic and cultural trauma related to globalization and Westernization(s) via a military-popular culture-media-entertainment industry (for similar discussion, see der Derian 2009) that seems now to be remembered and viewed with some grainy, darkened and hazed-out remembrance of the 2010s where some of us even then were calling out in concern for a dystopian future of American democracy and the brainwashing power of media that were echoed by academic and public scholars from Naomi Klein to Michael Moore to Noam Chomsky. In the chapter that opens this book's first section, "Trumpism and Its Attack(s) on Journalism: Fear, Phobias, and Fighting 'Bullshit,'" David L. Altheide writes that the "politics of fear" emerged in the rise of Trump, is triumphing through media and popular discourses of globalization and politics and "can only survive when users cannot think critically and are oriented to accepting brief, emotionally resonant messages." It is a powerful message with which to start the book in an age of "bullshit" that we have seen around Trump's time, the direct rejection of caring about truth (for more, see Ball, 2017; Davis, 2017; McNair, 2018; Phillips, 2019). While Altheide doesn't write about "bullshit" expressly, he connects media power to the current and future days of political reporting about the presidency and "democracy."

Relatedly, one of the major areas of research that emerged from Trump's time in office is how journalists recognized and addressed conservative news media. This, of course, was featured in our earlier book on Trump and journalism but is elevated in its mood by wishing to outline its rise and its architectures, as Jessica Collier, Gina Masullo, and Marley Duchovnay do in their piece on audiences. Here, the authors turn to interviews with conservatives to understand why they desire the media they do, which is based largely around who they think they can trust to give them the news. Lindsey Meeks goes further into the discussion of trust by highlighting issues of "distrust" and presents practical solutions for growing trust between media and the Right-wing. We see in the last chapters of this section a further exploration of ideological forces at play within the diversity of U.S. voting systems and the degrees to which even the surprising adoption of Trumpism is rationalized. Specifically, Hannah Artman and Sallie Hughes look at stories of Cuban American voters from Miami who voted for Trump and were/are influenced by media to support conservative explanations of the everyday. Lastly, Prashanth Bhat turns to deplatforming as a means by which citizens and media outlets remove voices from the mainstream. In his work reveals the platforms and other digital places people go for Right-wing news when it is banned by the mainstream, elite journalism and offers serious thoughts for what deplatforming might mean for journalism of tomorrow.

Through this first section, we see how journalism is imbued with truth, bullshit, adoption, and scrutiny of information and messages both developed and relayed by news outlets themselves. The book turns then to its second section, "Journalism's (Failed) Responses to Trump: From Disinformation to Social Distance," where authors construct a landscape by which journalists function to maintain their positions of truth-tellers but also seem to fail to speak to and among all communities equally. The first piece in this section is a bit of a risk-taker by which Maria Marron and her co-authors reflect on their undergraduate university course in politics and media to conduct a qualitative analysis of news coverage during the 2020 campaign and

election. Personally and professionally I believe it is important to extend our own inclusivity of scholarship and publishing to those still learning (aren't we all, still?) the ropes of research and social commentary. In this chapter, then, I see value in the overarching and broad strokes painted in the coverage of "Right" and "Left" media, particularly in their assessment of "bias" that may or may not have emerged in their reporting on Trump and Biden in a type of horse race. I am grateful for their efforts in providing this overview that leads into critical analysis of particular moments of our everyday (news) lives, which Pam Creedon conducts in her piece on "cultural war escalation" via Trump and local politics in the following piece.

There, Creedon brings this discussion to her own life and a reflection of her state of Iowa that was in a complete state of political turmoil that mirrored that at the national level near the end of Trump's reign, particularly when efforts to end the teaching of critical race theory and protections for women's sports were woven into daily news. I have long believed Trump emerged from a bottom-up, local-to-national movement of political actors, religious zealots, and hungry media that pushed to the top the agendas that were stewing during the Clinton years, the early War on Terror years, and the Obama years that emerged with great wrath to bring about Trump (Gutsche, 2018a). In short, this chapter helps to ground what is often a national conversation focused on politics and national reporters and media systems to a local one. In the following chapter, Stephen Heidt hones-in on the national level of press coverage, particularly the coverage of presidential rhetoric that had national and international implications during an intersection of fear and pandering during a pandemic and Trump's run up to the 2020 election where COVID-19 and his ego collided. Al Cross, then, takes us back to the local level and out of the realm of COVID-only to rural America and the role of local journalists in covering Trump throughout his presidency. In this work, we see the impact that the divisiveness or perceptions of bias, the local and everydayness of the effects of radical politics and a press unprepared (or predispositioned) for it has on editors and publishers, a group even more maligned than local journalists in academic work.

In the book's Part III, "Journalism and Politics in Opposition to Trumpism: From Bashing to Biden," authors look at the transition from Trump to Biden, from being a target of digital activists to how Biden has brought back "normal" and how that might not be a good thing. Sydney Forde opens this section with her take on #UnFoxMyBox, a digital activist campaign to get cable subscribers to remove Fox News from their subscriber packages. A part critical political economy and commentary on the ills and misses of liberal-agenda activism, Forde gives us a hint at what could be coming in terms of more aggressive and individualized for future politicians and what could be powerful fodder for citizens and journalists alike interested in supporting – or undercutting – social issues and the role of media in them. Leon Barkho, then, reminds us that we are already, indeed, "After Trump," at least in the order of the presidents, and discusses how Trump, himself, used rhetoric in his role as "former president," a term used frequently by journalists to characterize those who once sat in the Oval Office, but have left. Barkho complicates this diction. Fred Blevens follows with his assessment of how a Biden Presidency has (or hasn't) changed how journalists look at the presidency and the U.S. role in global society by analyzing the words of journalists themselves. From shock at Trump to possible boringness with Biden, what emerges is a critique of what journalists "look for" in

presidential coverage. Closing out this section, Nolan Higdon and colleagues write that the new normal (a term used by both those returning to “normal” as they hope to reach an end to COVID-19 and in an “After Trump” Presidency. I find this idea of “returning to normalcy” especially interesting, as I wrote recently for the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication:

COVID-19 hasn’t changed us enough. So while the desire to return to normal is something that can change behavior and assist in the care of people, beware the danger of going forward, particularly in terms of our scholarship that frequently lags behind the times, becomes retrospective, and often shapes collective forgetting that keeps us in the pretty past. (Gutsche, 2020c)

Higdon and his coauthors do not provide a nostalgic notion of “return,” but actually challenge the very notion that Biden is any better, though their arguments surround critical interpretations of the presidency and its collusive nature with the press rather than picking on any one president.

The book’s fourth section is titled “Journalism’s Ideological and Practical Crisis: From Norms to ‘New, New, New’ Journalism?” Here, authors ask whether journalism has changed because of or since Trump, if the changes are beneficial for society, and if so, how those changes are sustained. Katherine M. Bell provides a provocative piece on whether journalism will be able to shed its racist histories and current tendencies and structures. COVID-19, despite its racialized disparities, really has hidden a lot of the news coverage on the underlying racial inequalities and intentionality’s of U.S. politics, institutions, and societies. Bell asks if there can be a future for “anti-racist journalism,” though. Jesse Benn and Jeff Tischauser provide an equally critical assessment on the future of journalism, providing personal and scholarly takes on how the politics of today align with other critical and cultural assessments throughout this book, but also connect the ideological meanings of newswork in political speech connect to the structural and individual. In a type of response, I have placed Perry Parks piece on journalism that “minimizes harm,” or that should, as a means by which to interrogate the section’s chapters that came before it. Parks offers an intriguing and detailed analysis of what this journalism could look like, why it matters, and how the foundations for it are in scholarship and faith/philosophical systems already around us. Ending the book is a piece from Douglas Kellner, whose work opened the first book we did on Trump and journalism. Here, Kellner, possibly the dean of contemporary Cultural and Media Studies, argues that Authoritarian Populism that gave rise to Trump hasn’t gone away and actually never came to be – it always was. He ends his essay with words that I think are important for scholars today – and for those who are doing our journalism. Kellner writes here:

For as long as human beings have vision, goals, and autonomy, we can design, shape, and restructure our technologies, as well as be shaped and constrained by them. Hence, the future of the human adventure is bound up in technopolitics and requires that we rethink the dynamics of technology, politics, and everyday life.

In the end, I hope we surround ourselves with this idea, and while I wish to encourage you to turn back to the work of several of these authors from our first project in 2018 to see how they have developed their ideas since, please consider these words as independent and intrusive, interrogative, and idealistic, because without the audacity of idealism (sorry, Obama, not “hope,” as he put in his own book’s title), we are doomed.

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Endnotes

ⁱ As editor, I have been very pleased with the work that the authors did there that I have mentioned dozens of times in interviews I have done during the Trump presidency on CNN, Deutsche Welle, Al Jazeera, and elsewhere. This exposure, including independent and related scholarship done by chapter, served also to extend the scholarship of that project into community groups, engaging with citizens not just through conventional scholarship and classrooms but through conversations, debate, and discussion.

ⁱⁱ I should be clear that I intentionally use “journalisms” in the plural to represent not just the technologically diverse forms of journalism, which seems to have been the most dominant use of the term in the past, but the ideological even within the mainstream. My hope is the term can encourage people to see their own journalism(s) as being more than they appear and the potential to make them more. Journalism, largely in my use here, refers to mainstream, elite journalism.

ⁱⁱⁱ If it matters for those reading this and as a point of transparency, I consider myself a Bob La Follette progressive.

^{iv} For these and other “Page One” images from across the world, visit “Today’s Front Pages,” by the Freedom Forum at <https://www.freedomforum.org/todaysfrontpages/#1>.