



## Why the Mainstream Media Is Now the Biggest Threat to Democracy

### Description

What is the biggest threat to democracy? Is it technology? No, it's not. How about the lack of youth in politics or even gender imbalances? No, and no. Maybe the climate crisis? Again, no. OK, so it has to be voting machines, right? Wrong again.

According to a recent poll commissioned by The New York Times, 59 percent of registered voters believe that the mainstream media is the biggest threat to American democracy. To be clear, not social media, the mainstream media.

Part of the distrust involves fake news. It has become tough to separate the factual from the fabricated fluff. Thank goodness, then, that there's no shortage of fact-checkers. However, the fact-checking movement is one riddled with flaws. Even some of the more reputable fact-checking sites appear to be submerged in a sea of faulty thinking and misleading reports. Instead of stubbornly pursuing the truth, they appear to be falling prey to dangerous cognitive biases that see them regularly distort the truth.

All of this raises a rather important question: If the self-appointed arbiters of truth can't be trusted, who are we to trust?

Also, there's a delicious irony in the fact that the NY Times conducted the aforementioned poll. After all, it has been accused of warping narratives and pushing fact-free stories on more than one occasion. Last year, Ashley Rindsberg, an investigative journalist of genuine repute, published "The Gray Lady Winked," a great book outlining the many ways in which the NY Times has, for years, knowingly misled the American people.

As Rindsberg demonstrates to devastating effect, the NY Times, arguably the most influential paper in the world, has the power to influence wars and shape U.S. culture in any image it sees fit. Other papers cover the news; the NY Times, we're told, creates it.

Of course, it's not fair to single out the NY Times for criticism without acknowledging the fact that other major outlets have also engaged in questionable acts of journalism. Remember when all those mainstream media outlets told us to mask up, that the vaccine "cure" would be many times better than the COVID-19 curse, and the never-ending lockdowns would be worth it? You most certainly do.



Demonstrators gather outside the Massachusetts State House to protest COVID-19 vaccination and mask mandates in Boston on Sept. 17, 2021. (Joseph Prezioso/AFP via Getty Images)

Think of all the outlets that waxed lyrical about Dr. Anthony Fauci, otherwise known as “America’s doctor.” We all witnessed the devastation caused by extensive lockdowns. Tens of thousands of small businesses were destroyed. Again, though, just like it’s disingenuous to single the NY Times out without criticizing other outlets, it’s unfair to focus too much on the narratives, be they false or otherwise, centered around just one man—even if this man is someone in a genuine position of power.

Our minds have been manipulated by carefully crafted narratives for years, even decades. As Samuel Lopez De Victoria, a psychotherapist and writer, previously noted, the media uses a number of manipulation methods to sow seeds of conformity and compliance. This includes stacking the airwaves with so-called experts pushing very specific narratives. If anyone questions what’s being prescribed, they’re mockingly asked, “Wait, are you more knowledgeable than an expert? No? Then shut up and take your medicine.”

Another tactic used by mainstream media outlets is ridicule and labeling.

“I am often amused at the interesting adjectives used by a proponent of one side against the other,” De Victoria said. He then proceeded to list a few of these adjectives, including “racist,” “Nazi,” “?-phobe,” “irrelevant,” “killer,” and more. “By applying these labels on that person,” he said, “you freeze, isolate, and polarize” them. Indeed, you do. Today, it isn’t uncommon to see objective criticisms met with snide remarks and ad hominem attacks, often by individuals who claim to value the truth over everything else.

Finally, De Victoria said, the media uses repetition to reinforce certain messages.

“Some of the most successful tyrants in history used great emotion and repetition to their advantage.” They most certainly did. Joseph Goebbels, the chief propagandist of the Nazi party, famously said that the “most brilliant propagandist technique will yield no success unless one fundamental principle is borne in mind constantly—it must confine itself to a few points and repeat them over and over.”

We were fed the Trump–Russia collusion narrative for years, only to find out that the whole story was built on a foundation of sand. The same can be said for the efficacy of masks, vaccines, and lockdowns. In psychology, we call this the mere-exposure effect. This occurs when people develop a preference for things that they are familiar with. Familiarity, they say, breeds contempt. In some cases, it also breeds a false sense of security, a comfort in sourcing knowledge from places with little interest in providing accurate information.

Americans have lost faith in their institutions, including media institutions. As the country becomes more polarized and narratives become more divisive in nature, expect the renunciation of mainstream media to continue.

*Views expressed in this article are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.*

by John Mac Ghlionn

**Category**

1. Freedom-Free speech-Resistance & H-rights
2. Main
3. NWO-Deep State-Dictatorship-Tyranny

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