

Social Media
Addiction and
Marketing



Peace in the
Middle East!



Prescription
Drug Prices
Plummet



FACT CHECKER

School Choice is a Clear Winner!

"I don't care if it's a public, private, charter, virtual or a home school," said South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, a Black Republican. "When a parent has a choice, a kid has a better chance." School choice will allow Black and brown families a chance to escape the big-city public schools that have failed their kids for decades. Another school-choice advocate speaking on the RNC opening night was Rebecca Friedrichs, the California public school teacher who fought her union's ability to take dues from teachers who oppose their union's politics. Friedrichs said teachers' unions continue "trapping so many precious, low-income children in dangerous, corrupt and low-performing schools." Another was Georgia Democratic state Rep. Vernon Jones, a Black man, who lauded school choice as a chance for Black voters to walk away. "The Democratic Party does not want Black people to leave the mental plantation they've had us on for decades," Jones said. "But I have news for them: We are free people with free minds." It might surprise them to know that parents may care more about their children's education than political ideology. And those swing voters among suburban soccer moms have already identified themselves as somewhat guilty about their status, perhaps one reason for those hate-has-no-home-here signs in front lawns. There's more to a quality education than academics; good schools give students a healthy moral environment that appears to shape their future family life. Delivering a basic education is only one function of a good school. Schools don't just convey academic knowledge to children; they also play a critical role in fashioning a child's moral life, and the effects of this formation extend well beyond the classroom walls.

How Public Schools Indoctrinate Kids Without Almost Anyone Noticing.

Teaching the value of free thought matters now more than ever. Indoctrination happens through many channels—entertainment, speeches, and censorship—but its main instrument is the school system.



Google Monopoly and Censorship

Google search has blacklisted numerous major news websites, removing them from results in what appears to be a major new censorship purge. Searches for direct headlines also return either nothing or links to corporate media news.



Change Your Search Engine to DuckDuckGo to avoid censorship, spying and profiling. Check out The Epoch Times, The Blaze, Breitbart News, Reclaim the Net, & The Gateway Pundit

In 2020, 91% of all internet searches were done on Google. Additionally, Google controls 70% of the advertising. Google is the primary search engine on Androids and pays Apple 1.5 Billion a year to be the default search engine for iPhones. Main stream media would not survive without Google searches.



New York State is Broke

We have a deficit of \$8 Billion. The top one percent of NYC taxpayers pay nearly 50 percent of all personal income taxes collected in New York. Poor leadership, high crime, mental illness and homelessness, combined with severe COVID restrictions have driven the wealthy and their offices out of the city. The poor consume most of the taxes through social programs. More than 400,000 New Yorkers reside in public housing. Another 235,000 receive rent assistance. That all costs a lot of money. The New York City Housing Authority needs \$24 billion over the next decade just for vital repairs. These dependencies, until now, have simply been a given in the ecosystem. No one will be left to pay for the poor, who are stuck here, and the city will collapse in the transition.

Police in Australia monitor social media for lockdown dissent. Will California be the first US state to follow?

When Australian citizens, concerned that lockdowns are an affront to civil liberties, post on Facebook, the posts often get deleted. When they protest in public, they get arrested.

California Democrats punish users on social media platforms expressing their doubts or criticism of the US voting system.



You Should Be Aware Of These 10 Effects Of Social Media Addiction

By Amanda Rife

Technology is a useful tool, but many people don't know how to use it properly which can easily become damaging. As much as you may love your Twitter page is it really worth the toll it takes on your health? That's for you to decide after you read the following 10 ways social media negatively effects your life:

- 1. Reduces person to person interaction.** Not only do you spend less quality time with is people who are physically present in your life, but they will quickly get annoyed by you when you're paying more attention to an electronic device than them. Eventually the people around you will even stop wanting to hang out with you.
- 2. Increases your cravings for attention drastically.** Posting vague statuses on Facebook to grab others attention could easily become a nasty habit for people who use social media frequently. The never ending competition for likes and notifications can consume you.
- 3. Distracts from life goals.** It's so easy to get wrapped up in what's going on in social media that people will neglect their real life goals. Instead of aiming for the dream job by obtaining useful skills people, especially younger people, tend to strive for internet stardom.
- 4. It can lead to a higher risk of depression.** According to recent studies the more people used social media the more negative feelings they experience, including depression. This could partiularly harmful to people who have been previously diagnosed with depression. If you beginning to notice you're feeling down on a regular basis it's probably time to take a break from your many social media.
- 5. Relationships are more likely to fail.** No good comes out of online displays of jealousy and snooping. It may seem like an easy option when it comes to dealing with relationships, but in reality it

does more damage than good. In fact, studies show that the more a person uses Facebook the more likely they will be to monitor their partner, which leads to arguments and crumbling relationships.

- 6. Excessive use of social media stunts creativity.** I can speak from personal experience that social media is the easiest way to stunt, or kill, the creative process. Surfing social media sites, especially Tumblr. in this scenario, has a numbing effect on the mind that's similar to mindlessly watching television. If you plan on being productive today shut off those apps!
- 7. Cyber bullying is alive and well.** People feel too comfortable on the web and say things they wouldn't normally say in real life. If you're not the one say horrible things, you're still inevitably going to be exposed to it. And if you are one of the people talking trash? Cut it out! You're not as anonymous as you think. With the rampant cyber bullying on the web, people are also becoming more rude off the web as well.
- 8. Constantly comparing yourself to others online will make you miserable.** The digital persona people display on Facebook is often much different that what actually goes on in their lives. After awhile you may feel like you know your online aquainences better than you do, creating a social gap. Try to remember that everyone is just as human as you are.
- 9. Loss of sleep.** The light emitted from your various electronic screens tricks your mind into thinking it's not time for you to sleep. Getting enough sleep each night is already difficult enough without extra complications. Perhaps it's best if your phone doesn't stay with you though the night.
- 10. Lack of privacy.** Between social media websites saving (and selling) your personal data and the whole NSA mess involving unsolicited government access of personal data including email, Skype calls, and so much more it's very clear that privacy and the internet don't mix at this point in time. If you post every last thought that pops into your head it could just as easily come back to haunt you in the future.

What is Social Media Addiction?

By Michael Muldoon
Rehab Spot

Social media is a new pathway of human interaction which has exploded in popularity in the past decade, shaping the landscape of online communication. While it's still incredibly popular, social media is under increasing scrutiny from parents, the media, and even social media users on many platforms. Research is being done into the incidence of social media addiction and what it may mean for the social media companies and their users.

Social media addiction is not a formal clinical diagnosis. However, many people spend far too much time on social media. On the positive side, social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, allow us the ability to stay in contact and connected with family and friends who reside far away. Unfortunately, people spend hours a day updating their status, uploading new pictures, commenting on other people's posts, searching for new friends, and playing Facebook games, among other activities. With social media addiction, the focus becomes the digital world, and the person is less engaged in the physical world of relationships.

What Is Considered Addictive?

As our understanding of human behavior has evolved, so too has our definition of addiction. Addictions, now more commonly referred to as use disorders, can arise from chemically-addictive substances or pleasurable behaviors.

Chemical Addictions

Chemical addictions, such as addictions to Nicotine, Opioids, and Alcohol, rely on a substance and its interaction with our physiology. Habitual substance use normalizes the body to the chemical. This becomes problematic if access to the substance slows or stops. Once the substance is no longer available, the body believes it lacks something that it needs, which causes withdrawal symptoms. While these types of substance use disorders are most commonly acknowledged to be "addictions," research has begun to uncover patterns of behaviors that may also constitute addictive disorders.

Behavioral Addictions

Behavioral disorders is the category under which social media addiction falls. Researchers have been hesitant to classify behavioral disorders as similar to substance use disorders, but as we have learned more, they appear more similar. Behavioral disorders provide: *short-term reward that may engender persistent behavior despite knowledge of adverse consequences...*

Short-term reward refers to the "high" of doing the activity, and that high may compel people to form habits even if they know those habits are harmful. These two types of addictive disorders (behavioral and chemical) are also similar in several other ways:

- Tolerance
- Other disorders occurring simultaneously
- Effects on the brain
- Obsessive preoccupation
- Pursuit despite negative consequences
- Similar brain reward system changes
- Urges to use more and more
- Avoidance of personal or professional problems
- Negative consequences at work, school, or home

- Multiple unsuccessful attempts to quite or cut back

The inability to resist an impulse regardless of the outcome is indicative of an addiction. While using Heroin is certainly a less socially acceptable impulse, researchers are learning that Heroin addiction impacts the same pathways in the brain as does the impulse to eat unhealthy food. Like a fast food habit, any pleasurable activity may be considered addictive if the person doing it knows that it is significantly harmful, yet cannot stop.

Social Media Addiction

The “social” in social media refers to a platform’s ability to allow people to communicate in ways that traditional media does not facilitate. Every social media platform operates differently, but the key aspect is the opportunity to see and react to everyone’s content. Most platforms allow people to “like,” comment about, and share other people’s contributions. Liking someone’s Tweet, Facebook status, or Instagram post is just the click of a button, but social media users’ anticipation of attention and approval from other users can create a flood of dopamine in their brains. Relying on these interactions as a means of mood regulation can take someone dangerously close to a social media addiction.

Likes

Likes are a way for people viewing your content to express their approval. Whether posting content to a specific group or posting a new photo album for your friends list and strangers to see, the expectation of likes and engagement with your content can create a rush for people. This expectation can become habit forming, especially if the validation of these reactions helps boost self-confidence. The rush that is created is a release of dopamine due to the neural pathways in the reward center of the brain being activated. The behavior can become a “habit” because of the desire to experience this sensation again.

Infinite Scroll

Within the past few years, US lawmakers have considered banning the “infinite scroll” feature that many, if not all, social media platforms offer. The volume of content published on each platform is so great that one person cannot possibly see all of it. In order to keep people using their platforms longer, social media platforms present an array of content associated with that person’s interests and organize them with algorithms to create a near infinite string of content for users to browse.

As professionals more carefully weigh social media against mental health, they’ve begun questioning this element of site structure. Should the content be endless? Does it encourage unhealthy habits of overuse? We don’t have conclusive evidence that the infinite scroll causes social media addiction, but it is designed to occupy users as long as possible. If someone has issues regulating their use of the infinite scroll, even in the face of severe consequences, it becomes problematic.

Help is out there

Reach out to a dedicated treatment professional and learn how you can create the life you want.

Psychological Factors of Social Media Addiction

Studies on the relationship between social media and psychology are beginning to uncover the ways in which they influence each other. Multiple researchers have found a significant correlation between feelings of conscientiousness, extroversion, loneliness, negative self-image, neuroticism, and unhealthy social media use.

A mix of extroversion and loneliness seem to be a powerful combination in compelling people to continue engaging in social media use regardless of its impact on them. Someone who requires more social interaction in order to maintain their mood would suffer more greatly in loneliness than someone who doesn’t require the same stimulation. Researchers report that social media functions as a relief from that feeling while users interact with friends or even strangers.

Facts About Social Media Addiction

With social media addiction, the focus becomes the digital world and the person is less engaged in the physical world of relationships.

Individuals often use social media to find validation and companionship, usually when they are missing these in their real life or the physical world.

Research indicates that teenagers who struggle with an anxiety disorder or depression are at greater risk of developing a social media addiction because they may use it as a way to distract themselves from negative emotions or troubling thoughts.

Individuals with high stress may turn to social media to decompress and then develop a pattern of using social media that can become addictive.

Teens with a limited social life are at greater risk of developing a social media addiction.

Social media can cause decreased self-esteem and self-doubt.

A study conducted by the University of Copenhagen found that many people suffer from “Facebook envy,” when they abstained from using Facebook or other social media platforms. Individuals who report abstaining from Facebook report increased satisfaction with their lives.

A study published in the American Journal of Epidemiology that assessed 5,208 subjects found that overall, regular use of Facebook had a negative impact on an individual’s wellbeing.

Many people use social media at night prior to going to bed, which has been proven to negatively impact one’s sleep. The light from mobile devices, among other devices, just inches from one’s face can suppress the release of melatonin, a hormone that helps us feel tired.

Not only has social media been proven to cause unhappiness, but it can also lead to the development of mental health issues such as anxiety or depression when used too much or without caution.

Specific Websites

Facebook

Facebook is one of the oldest and most successful social media platforms. Facebook allows people to communicate with each other through text, audio, photo, and video formats. Websites like Facebook and Myspace popularized the profile picture, which paved the way for the development of the visual fixation in social media. This visual focus is integral to the next company associated with overuse, especially among teenage audiences.

Instagram

Instagram, owned by Facebook, is a primarily visual social media platform, although it also has a messenger feature and allows users to comment on posts.. As Instagram grew in popularity, selfies and self-image in general became a key part of Instagram. Studies have found that those with positive self-image and high self-confidence were least likely to develop harmful Instagram use habits. Daily use and more negative self-image were associated with higher rates of Instagram use.

YouTube

YouTube focuses on video content entirely. Instead of an infinite scroll, YouTube features an infinite autoplay. The YouTube algorithm assembles a continuous playlist of related videos based on the content someone views. People who are lonely and vulnerable to social media overuse may find comfort in YouTube videos featuring relatable entertainers and community engagement in the form of comments.

Efforts to exploit technical, social, economic, and institutional configurations of media can catalyze social change, sow dissent, and challenge the stability of social institutions.

Data & Society's Media Manipulation & Disinformation research examines how different groups use the participatory culture of the internet to turn the strengths of a free society into vulnerabilities, ultimately threatening expressive freedoms and civil rights. Efforts to exploit technical, social, economic, and institutional configurations of media can catalyze social change, sow dissent, and challenge the stability of social institutions. Broadly, this initiative takes a sociotechnical approach to understanding the **social, political, and economic incentives to game information systems, websites, platforms, and search engines**—especially in cases where the attackers intend to destabilize democratic, social, and economic institutions. Through empirical research, we **identify the unintended consequences** of socio-technical systems and track attempts to **locate and address threats**, with an eye towards increasing organizational capacity across fields, so that action can be taken as problems emerge.

From social movements, to political parties, governments, dissidents, and corporations, many groups engage in active efforts to shape media narratives. Media manipulation tactics include: planting and/or amplifying misinformation and disinformation using **humans** (troll armies, doxxing, and bounties) or **digital tools** (bots); **targeting journalists** or public figures for social engineering (psychological manipulation); **gaming** trending and ranking algorithms, and **coordinating action** across multiple user accounts to force topics, keywords, or questions into the public conversation. Because the internet is a tool, a tactic, and a territory – integral to challenging the relations of power– studying the new vulnerabilities of networked media is fundamental to the future of democracies.

Data & Society's Media Manipulation research initiative is generously supported by the Craig Newmark Philanthropies, the Ford Foundation, News Integrity Initiative, and other donors through programmatic and general support.

For more information on media manipulation and marketing, explore the Data Society web site at

<https://datasociety.net/research/media-manipulation/>

Trump's Middle East Peace Deals Proved 'Experts' And Pundits Wrong

Rather than acknowledging they were wrong and having the grace to celebrate the Trump administration's historical breakthrough, leftist pundits are busy trashing these agreements as 'no big deal.'

By Helen Raleigh

SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

History was made Sept. 15, 2020, when President Donald Trump hosted the signing of the Abraham Accords, peace treaties among Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain. This extraordinary accomplishment could lead nations in the region to eventually end decades of conflicts and finally bring peace in the Middle East. Before the official signing ceremony, Trump told reporters that at least five or six Arab nations, including Saudi Arabia, would be “coming along very quickly” to sign similar treaties with Israel.

Yet for almost three years, so-called experts and pundits have warned that with an unconventional president in the White House and Jared Kushner, who is young and had no previous diplomatic experience, in charge of peace negotiations, there would be no peace deal in the Middle East.

The New York Times asked in a tweet back in February 2017, “Can Jared Kushner, a 36 year old real estate heir with no diplomatic experience, pull off peace in the Middle East?”

Seth Abramson, a columnist for Newsweek, tweeted, “SPOILER: No, a random 30 year-old with no special talents cannot bring peace to the Middle East.”

After the Trump administration announced in December 2017 that the United States would recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and move the U.S. embassy there, experts and pundits warned that the administration's announcement and action would lead to more violence in the Middle East and even World War III. The media blasted an array of hyperbolic headlines.

“Deaths in Gaza result of utter disregard of Messers Trump & Netanyahu for Palestinian rights & homeland,” former CIA Director John Brennan warned in a tweet. “By moving Embassy to Jerusalem, Trump played politics, destroyed US peacemaker role. New generation of Israelis/Palestinians need to isolate extremists to find path to peace.”

John Kerry, former secretary of state during the Obama-Biden administration, sounded the alarm that moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem would lead to a Mideast explosion. Aaron David Miller, a former Middle East peace negotiator for Republican and Democratic presidents, warned on CNN, “Jerusalem is a tinderbox, waiting for a match.”

“Reports indicate the president will move the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem,” tweeted Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif. “I wrote him last week to explain why that would be a terrible decision.” In her letter to the president, Feinstein said the move would “spark violence, further alienate the United States and undermine the prospects of a two-state solution.” Interestingly, Feinstein voted for the 1995 Jerusalem Embassy Act, which required “the relocation of the United States embassy in Israel to Jerusalem.” The bill passed 93-5.

Former Vice President Joe Biden, the Democrats' presidential nominee, declared last year that he opposed the embassy move, despite having previously supported such a move for more than three decades.

Many world leaders, including some U.S. allies, also criticized the Trump administration, saying such a move would increase tensions in the region. French President Emmanuel Macron noted he had "warned repeatedly of the repercussions" of Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said the embassy move was "very, very unfortunate" and that it disqualified the United States from being a mediator in the Middle East peace process. Erdogan also threatened to cut diplomatic ties with Israel. Even Pope Francis voiced "profound concern" over the move, making a "heartfelt appeal to make everyone's commitment to respect the status quo of the city, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions."

When the Trump administration rolled out its Israeli-Palestine peace deal, mainstream media dismissed it as "Kushner's deal." The Atlantic claimed the plan was built on "Un-American principles," and the New York Times dismissed it as "dead on arrival."

The Trump Administration Took a New Approach

The signing of peace deals between Israel and the two Arab nations this week, with more potential similar deals in the future, is the strongest evidence yet that so many experts, pundits, and politicians have been so wrong for so long.

Trump and Kushner's unconventional approach in the Middle East worked because they recognized early on, in Kushner's words, that building a new peaceful future in the Middle East requires "altering a U.S. policy that for far too long had accepted the historic animosities" in the region and "even nurtured them."

Trump and Kushner took a new approach: "[I]nstead of rewarding America's enemies, we pledged to draw our partners closer. Rather than lecturing America's friends, we committed to taking forceful action against the evils of extremism and terror. Finally, we resolved to pursue these goals grounded in the realities of today, not the ghosts of the past." That strategic realignment has been effective and fruitful.

Media Don't Know When to Quit

Of course, rather than acknowledging they were wrong and having the grace to celebrate the Trump administration's historical breakthrough, leftist pundits are already busy trashing these agreements as "no big deal."

For example, Jacki Schechner, editor-in-chief of InvestigateRussia.org and former CNN commentator, tweeted: "What am I missing? Was there conflict between Israel, the UAE, and Bahrain?"

"Reality check: Israel has never gone to war with UAE or Bahrain," tweeted Aaron Rugar, a journalist for Vox.

To help Schechner, Rugar, and other like-minded people understand why these peace treaties are historic achievements, I recommend this tweet from Erick Erickson, a well-known blogger and radio host:

As someone who grew up in the UAE and saw my textbooks redacted of any mention of Israel and my family prohibited from visiting Israel, reporters downplaying the agreement b/w Israel, the UAE, and Bahrain out of fear of having to give Trump credit are hurting their credibility.

Considering reporters don't have much credibility left, especially with regard to the Trump administration, they might consider sitting this one out.

Sep 20, 2020



President Trump Delivering on Promise to Lower Rx Drugs

By Gil Gutknecht

President Trump has pulled the trigger on actually lowering prescription drug prices. By ending arbitrary trade barriers he could save Americans over \$50 Billion a year. Even staunch believers in free-market capitalism recognize that there are areas where the government is required to put on a striped shirt and play the referee.

Republicans going back to Teddy Roosevelt have understood that. Especially when companies have acquired monopoly powers. President Roosevelt ruffled feathers among Wall Street tycoons when he launched his effort to break up the trusts. Trusts that were abusing their market power, creating monopolies. American consumers were being harmed and economic growth stifled. The tycoons had figured out that it was easier to buy out or merge with competitors than to actually compete with them. Roosevelt understood that monopolies and free-market competition were like oil and water. The concentration of too much market power inevitably leads to abuse.

Donald Trump understands that as well.

When our Patent Office issues a new patent for a drug, we are essentially granting them monopoly power. They can sell that lifesaving drug (in the United States) for as much as they want. Insurance carriers try to negotiate better pricing. Pharmaceutical Benefit Managers came along promising to bargain on behalf of insurance companies and health organizations. The PBM's quickly became part of the problem, consuming nearly all of the savings.

All of this led to finger pointing, creating a convenient smokescreen for the real reasons for runaway drug prices in the United States. Along the way, Congress has made matters worse. They don't even allow Medicare (unlike the VA) to negotiate for better prices. The result is that Americans are forced pay much more for patented medications than people in any other industrialized nation.

The drug industry has framed the debate as a choice between socialized medicine and the free market. That's a classic canard. Monopolies are antithetical to free markets. We grant utilities monopoly status. We don't allow them to charge whatever they want. We regulate them. Try to name a monopoly that sells an essential product or service that is allowed to set their own prices?

The real question is how do we balance these competing interests? We believe in intellectual property rights. We need to continue to incentivize investment into new innovation. Bear in mind, however, much of the basic research that ultimately leads to new drugs is already underwritten by American taxpayers through the NIH and

the CDC. And the drug industry now spends more on marketing and advertising than R&D. How do we protect those interests while keeping American consumers from being held hostage and treated unfairly?

Well, success leaves clues.

Maybe our policymakers should do a little serious research. How do other countries balance these competing interests? What are they doing that we might consider?

Canada is not that far away. Canadian officials would welcome a Congressional Delegation to show them how their system works. At the heart of it is the way they grant patents for new drugs. The drug companies deserve intellectual property protections. The Canadian government retains the right to protect its citizens from monopolistic, predatory pricing.

So Canada puts conditions on the drug patents they issue. They require companies to negotiate prices. The Canadians created the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board (PMPRB). It functions much like a state Utility Commission. Like their utility counterparts, this board does some spadework into the R&D and production costs. They allow for a reasonable rate of return. In negotiations, the PMPRB has a strong hand.

The drug companies call this price fixing. OK. Perhaps they will share just how profitable their Canadian operations really are? Remember in the last tax reform, companies were encouraged to repatriate profits with lower tax rates? American drug companies were holding over \$300 billion offshore. Nearly all of it in nations that they claim have “socialized medicine price controls.” You can’t repatriate hundreds of billions in losses.

Facts are indeed stubborn things. It’s time to scrape away the veneer and find out just how the Canadian system actually works. Thankfully, President Trump has started the ball rolling. It’s time for Congress to pick it up and run with it.

Gil Gutknecht served six terms in the U.S. House from Minnesota. He authored legislation which passed the House that would have allowed Americans to import Rx drugs from 16 industrialized countries.

INVESTOR'S BUSINESS DAILY®

Single Parenthood And Poverty, The Undeniable Connection

ROBERT J. SAMUELSON

03/18/2018

Anyone who has raised children knows that it's a messy, trial-and-error process, with an emphasis on "error." It's hard enough to do well with two parents, a reasonably stable and sane marriage and a reliable income. When there's only one parent with a meager income, the burdens mount and feed on themselves. That's one reason why the growth of single-parent households is rightly regarded as one cause of poverty.

Or so I thought.

Naturally, I was shocked recently to read in The New York Times — with all the Times' authority — an opinion essay headlined, "Single Mothers Are Not the Problem." In a country of more than 320 million people, the essay argued, there just aren't that many households headed by a single mother — about 9% — to explain poverty.

"Even if they all married or never had children," the essay continued, "poverty would not be substantially lower."

Could this possibly be so? Could many poverty experts, who believe there's a connection between single-parent families and poverty, be wrong? Well, not by the government's own figures, as I will show in a moment.

But, first, let's put the Times essay in context. Its policy agenda is candid. "We should stop obsessing over how many single mothers there are and stop shaming them," write sociologists David Brady of the University of California, Riverside; Ryan M. Finnigan of the University of California, Davis; and Sabine Hubgen of WBZ Berlin Social Science Center.

Instead, they contend, we should raise benefits for all the poor, including single parents, to alleviate their poverty. This, they say, is what many European countries have done.

Of course, this is a worthy subject of debate. But it must be admitted that the odds of securing more money for the poor aren't good. The intense competition for government funds — for huge budget deficits, defense spending, health care and payments for the elderly — fosters an unfriendly political climate.

What's less worthy is basing any debate on misleading analysis. That's my complaint against the Times essay. Its hypothetical and admittedly unrealistic thought experiment that eliminating poverty among single mothers wouldn't have much effect on overall poverty is wrong, according to the government's own figures from the Census Bureau.

Let's look at the Census figures.

In 2016, 40.6 million Americans had incomes below the government's official poverty line, which was \$24,339 for a family of four, including two children. Of those below the poverty line — 12.7% of the population — nearly 5 million were Moms or Dads heading single-parent families; another 8.7 million were children under 18 in these single-parent homes.

Do the arithmetic. Together, single-parent families and their children totaled almost 14 million people, which is roughly a third of all people in poverty. If, magically, a third of America's poor escaped poverty, the change would (justifiably) be hailed as a triumph of social policy. If we included the children in poverty in two-parent families, that would add more than 7 million to the total (3 million parents and 4 million children). The total of 21 million would equal half of all people in poverty.

To read the Times essay, the effect of all of this on poverty would be negligible. Poverty would still be roughly the same. This is preposterous. But that's the impression that the Times leaves its readers.

How could this be? I called sociologist Brady, with whom I had several acrimonious exchanges. The answer seems to be that the sociologists' calculations were based on a different database of incomes and a different definition of poverty — and that these changes inflated the total number of designated poor.

Fair enough. Still, if you're making this case, you need to describe openly the differences between the official figures and yours, and why your choice is superior. This the Times essay did not do, because (it seems) one purpose was to exonerate single parenting from any role in explaining poverty. Somehow poverty and single parenthood are disconnected. Not so.

Single-parent households have less money and less time for children. To be sure, many single parents are heroic, but it's a struggle. Studies "tell us that children raised by single parents are significantly more likely to have children young, to drop out of **high school**, and to **work** less as young adults," writes sociologist W. Bradford Wilcox of the University of Virginia.

It cannot be good news that births to unmarried women have risen. In 2010, 72% of black births were to unmarried women, up from 38% in 1970; for Hispanics, that rate was 53% in 2010, up from 37% in 1990; for whites, 36% in 2010 and 6% in 1970. We are condemning more of our children to a precarious upbringing — and that *is* a problem.

% of adults ...

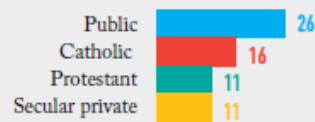
In an intact marriage



Ever been divorced*



Ever had a child out of wedlock



Notes: *Based on adults who are married or have been married before.

Source: AEI/IFS analysis of Understanding America Study (UAS), UAS20 and UAS37, conducted May 20, 2015 and Feb 5, 2016, respectively.

AEI/Institute for Family Studies

Private schools outpace public schools in putting kids on the path to marriage

There's more to a quality education than academics; good schools give students a healthy moral environment that appears to shape their future family life.

By W. Bradford Wilcox, Patrick Wolf & Peyton Roth

September 22, 2020

There is no doubt that the events of the past seven months have made many parents reconsider the relative value of private and public education. In March, as most schools shut down in-person education because of the COVID-19 pandemic, private schools typically pivoted more quickly than public schools to provide quality online education to their students. This fall, private schools have proved more capable than many public schools of

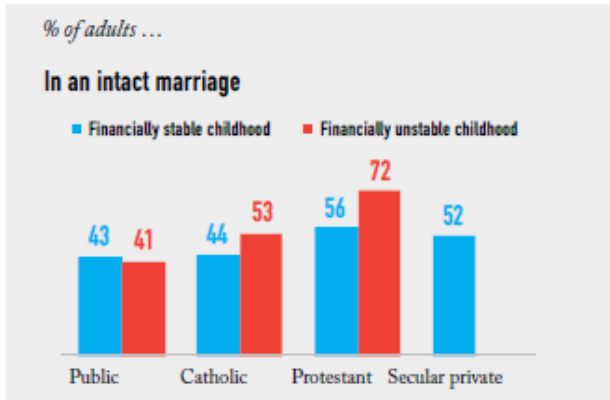
moving quickly to offer flexible, in-person, five-days-a-week education to their students. The upshot is that more parents are removing their children from public schools for the first time and enrolling them instead in private schools so they can continue to get the best possible education.

The relative success of private versus public schools in responding to the challenges of the pandemic adds another data point to the ongoing debate about whether public or private schools are more successful in delivering basic education to our nation's children. But delivering a basic education is only one function of a good school. Schools don't just convey academic knowledge to children; they also play a critical role in fashioning a child's moral life, and the effects of this formation extend well beyond the classroom walls. As social institutions, in the words of James Hunter and Ryan Olson of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture, schools have "distinctive ideals, beliefs, obligations, prohibitions, and commitments — many implicit and some explicit," which "form a moral ecology." Different kinds of schools, with different moral ecologies, set our children up for success or failure in areas of life outside of the classroom. Chief among these is family life.

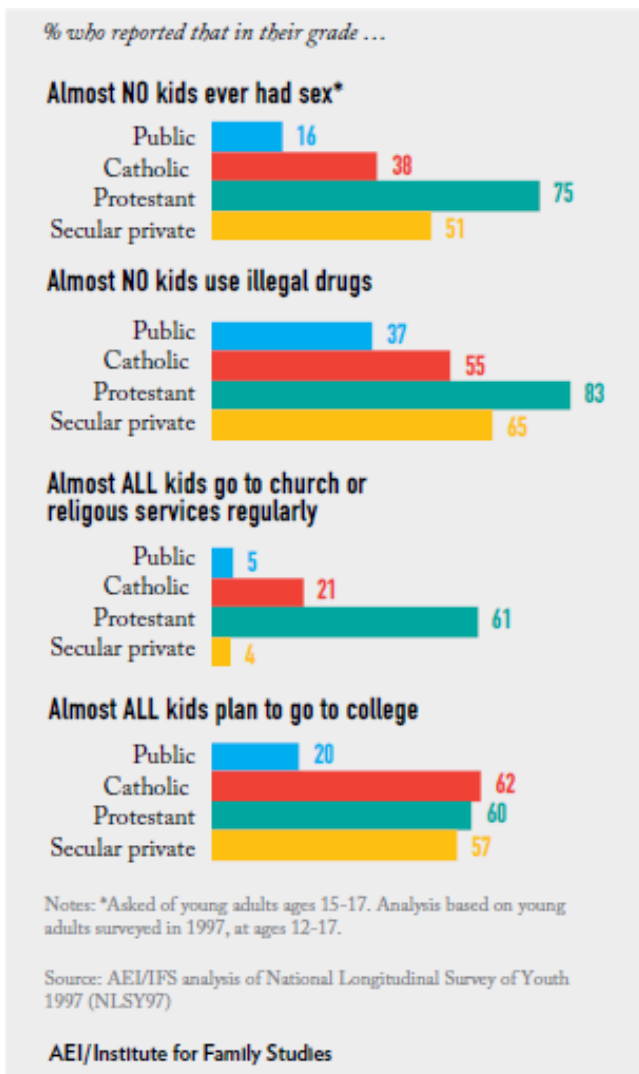
We know that men and women who forge strong and stable marriages are generally happier, healthier, and more prosperous. Any children they have are also more likely to be in better shape emotionally, economically, and educationally. And communities dominated by married men and women are more prosperous, economically mobile, and safer. It is for these reasons that, in a new report published by the Institute for Family Studies and the American Enterprise Institute, we and our colleagues, Albert Cheng and Wendy Wang, examined how enrollment in public, Catholic, Protestant, and secular private schools is associated with family outcomes later in life. What we discovered was evidence that the moral ecologies of these different school types are powerfully linked to the family lives students will ultimately lead as they grow into adulthood.

In general, students who attend private schools are more likely to forge strong and stable marriages, and to have their own children in marriage. We were especially struck by the ways in which students who attended Protestant schools had an advantage when it came to forming and sustaining their own families. Data from the Understanding America Study, a representative sample of U.S. adults, show that only 11 percent of Protestant-school attendees said they'd ever had a child out of wedlock, compared with more than a quarter of those who attended public school. Only 42 percent of public-school attendees said they had gotten married, compared with 49 percent of Catholic-school attendees, 53 percent of secular-private-school attendees, and 63 percent of Protestant-school attendees. Moreover, these distinctive effects of private schools, especially Protestant

ones, held in many cases even when we controlled for differences in students' race/ethnicity, parental education, family background, and family finances.



We were also struck by the ways in which children from financially disadvantaged families seemed to benefit especially from Catholic and Protestant schools when it came to their adult family lives. As the figure above indicates, adults raised in financially disadvantaged families were especially likely to form intact marriages if they'd gone to a Catholic or Protestant school. Our results suggest that these schools may offer children from disadvantaged backgrounds an especially big boost when it comes to forging strong families later in life.



What might explain the clear correlation between private-school attendance and the formation of a strong family as an adult? Social norms within peer groups likely play a large role. The figure above illustrates how much peer environments vary by the type of school a child attends. According to the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997, three-quarters of teens who attended a Protestant school said almost no kids in their grade had ever had sex. In comparison, only one-sixth of teens attending a public school said the same. Moreover, 83 percent of Protestant-school teens said almost no kids in their grade ever used illegal drugs, compared to just over a quarter of public-school attendees who said the same. These are just two examples of the many ways in which the peer environment our children encounter varies from public to private schools. Formal messaging from schools and teachers likely plays a role in shaping students' family life and sexual decisions, too. Whereas public schools have a greater tendency to promote family diversity or avoid difficult conversations about marriage and childbearing altogether, Protestant schools are more likely to teach that marriage is a good in itself and stress the importance of having children within marriage. Some Catholic schools present a similar message to their students, but today many of them steer clear of difficult conversations surrounding marriage and family life, as well. That may help explain why the effect of a Catholic education on children's future family life looks weaker today than the effect of a Protestant education. Whatever the core reason for the different family outcomes highlighted above, our report suggests that schools may well impact students' lives outside of the classroom. When it comes to family life, private schools — especially Protestant ones — seem to offer a clear advantage. We believe the public conversation surrounding the merits of different models of schooling needs to take into account this reality.

Moreover, as parents across the country reconsider their children's schooling in light of the pandemic, perhaps they should think not only of academics but also of how the moral environment of a school will shape their children's future family life. Of course, given the costs of private school and the family advantages that private schooling may offer to poor children in particular, it would also help immensely if lawmakers pursued policy options that made this choice affordable for all American families.

Real Clear Politics

In Empathy's Name, Trump the Disruptor Offers School Choice to #WalkAway Parents



By [John Kass](#)
August 26, 2020

President Donald Trump wasn't elected for his empathy. He was elected to kick the Washington establishment -- the bipartisan courtiers of our modern Versailles on the Potomac -- in their sensitive parts.

Kick them he did, repeatedly. And they fought back, swinging their corporate media hatchets at his head, so he slammed his

"Fake News" war club into their guts.

Now, with the election just months away, both sides seem out of breath, like TV wrestlers, exhausted, with folding chairs broken in pieces on the floor of our shabby national political amphitheater.

The Democrats built exhaustion into their strategy after Trump's 2016 election, and Trump has helped them with his brutal Twitter thumbs and commentary. In many ways, Trump is his own worst enemy.

So, this (virtual) Republican National Convention is every bit an infomercial as was the (virtual) Democratic offering days before. But this one is about counterprogramming.

It may be Trump's last chance to reframe himself, to offer something to parents sitting on the fence who seek a reason to walk away from the Democrats.

What Republicans offered those parents on the RNC opening night was this:

School choice, to allow Black and brown families a chance to escape the big-city public schools that have failed their kids for decades.

"I don't care if it's a public, private, charter, virtual or a home school," said South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, a Black Republican, in his stirring speech. "When a parent has a choice, a kid has a better chance."

Just then I thought I heard heads exploding among liberal pundits and the bosses of the teachers' unions, the ground troops of the modern Democratic Party. They just hate that social media #WalkAway campaign by Democratic voters who've decided to leave the party.

Trump's critics in the Democratic Media Complex along the Washington Beltway loathe his voters for rejecting their liberal wisdom. This blinds them and causes them to underestimate Trump.

It might surprise them to know that parents may care more about their children's education than political ideology.

Many Black parents know they've been taken for granted by the Democrats for decades. They look for a chance to walk away.

Hispanic parents may have resentment toward Trump over the immigration issue, but in Chicago at least, many take advantage of charter schools -- a testament to the fact that traditional public schools don't work for them.

And those swing voters among suburban soccer moms have already identified themselves as somewhat guilty about their status, perhaps one reason for those hate-has-no-home-here signs in front lawns.

They all want a reason to feel good about themselves when they vote. And they all have this in common. They're parents.

Will school choice work as a bridge from Republicans to those parents? I don't know.

The left's cancel culture is indeed powerful. Voters fear being mocked, which may explain the rise of those defining themselves as "undecided."

But optimism, rather than fear, will give them a place to stand as the election draws near. And school choice is all about optimism.

Another school-choice advocate speaking on the RNC opening night was Rebecca Friedrichs, the California public school teacher who fought her union's ability to take dues from teachers who oppose their union's politics.

Friedrichs said teachers' unions continue "trapping so many precious, low-income children in dangerous, corrupt and low-performing schools."

Another was Georgia Democratic state Rep. Vernon Jones, a Black man, who lauded school choice as a chance for Black voters to walk away.

"The Democratic Party does not want Black people to leave the mental plantation they've had us on for decades," Jones said. "But I have news for them: We are free people with free minds."

Trump's Republican Party did not offer a formal platform, but a wish list. School choice is prominent. Yes, states and local school districts run the schools, and I don't like federal mandates from on high.

But it's obvious that Republicans will push school choice in the campaign.

Those of us who've seen the decades of failure of Democratic-run big-city schools -- and the bigotry of low expectations built into those corrupt political systems -- see school choice as a civil rights issue.

Republicans portray Democrats as seeking the end of Western civilization, tearing down statues, burning cities. Democrats paint Republicans as racists, relying on identity politics to organize the hatreds.

But swing voters don't want more fire. They don't seek anger. They seek optimism.

Elections aren't only about feeling good about a candidate. They're about helping voters feel good about themselves.

At their convention, the Democrats slammed Trump for his handling of the coronavirus, and pushed empathy, identifying this as Joe Biden's strength. But they avoided policy specifics and any mention of urban violence energizing their hard-left base. The Democrats hurt themselves by not condemning big city violence.

But if Trump wants to win in November, he'll have to do more than rehash the last campaign.

Few voters, white, Black or brown, will mistake Mr. Trump for an empath. They know he's a slugger.

But they want to be optimistic. They love their kids.

And if school choice isn't all about empathy, what is?

https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2020/08/26/in_empathys_name_trump_the_disruptor_offers_school_choice_to_walkaway_parents_144068.html#!

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How Public Schools Indoctrinate Kids Without Almost Anyone Noticing

Teaching the value of free thought matters now more than ever. Unfortunately, most American public schools take the opposite approach.

By Auguste Meyrat

OCTOBER 26, 2018

Many people have long suspected that governments sometimes attempt to indoctrinate their people to increase the government's own power and influence. Unfortunately, ambitious governments will not stop at merely controlling what their people can do; they must control their minds.

Indoctrination happens through many channels—entertainment, speeches, and censorship—but its main instrument is the school system. Teachers have a captive audience of malleable young minds for several years. They may not have figured out how to make students smart and productive, but they can at least make them submissive and obedient.

Judging by results and from most people's experience, indoctrination is not only a problem with rogue regimes, but also a distinctly American problem. However, here it is difficult to determine the extent of indoctrination, how it works, or even if it does work.

Most Americans might receive a mediocre education, but this education may be so mediocre that the intended brainwashing might not even be effective. True, some will feel the Bern and join the Socialist Party, and others will become feminists and beat up women who protest abortion. A precious few may even become conservatives. Most, though, seem content to remain disengaged from politics, religion, and most ideas in general, and allow the mainstream media to think for them.

Far from resembling a unified collective, society has become more polarized and tribal. Some might see this as evidence of the failure of indoctrination, and the insuppressible human desire for freedom and justice, but they are mistaken. Indoctrination does work, and it is one the main reasons America is so divided.

What Is Indoctrination?

Few people seem to have a clear definition of indoctrination, and thus call anything they dislike indoctrination (e.g., "Leftists professors are indoctrinating their students," "Those fundamentalist Christians are indoctrinating their kids," or "Facebook is indoctrinating its users.").

While indoctrination involves pushing a certain opinion, it is also much more. It is the comprehensive effort of passively disseminating a particular viewpoint. The passive aspect is key. People who are indoctrinated with a certain narrative or ideology do not arrive at the intended conclusions through their own thinking, but hear the same thing repeated in a million different ways until they finally take it as unquestionable truth.

Because indoctrination happens in the absence of thinking, many teachers who engage in indoctrination do so unconsciously. They themselves take what they're given and pass it along without thinking. Ideologues often intervene at this level by writing the scripts for teachers, which is how LGBT advocacy and anti-Semitic fabrications become included in their lessons.

Thoughtlessness is essential. As the fictional demon Screwtape, from C.S. Lewis's "The Screwtape Letters," states in his letters to Wormwood, "It is funny how mortals always picture us as putting things into their minds: in reality our best work is done by keeping things out." A person who really thinks will eventually reason himself out of the things he heard at school.

In some ways this could be good--he could reason his way out of utopian thinking that contradicts reality. It could also be bad--he could reason his way out of superstitious beliefs, but not have the wherewithal to take the next step of adopting reasonable beliefs.

For this reason, it is often fruitless for Republican politicians to insist on incorporating more conservative viewpoints, or for conservative intellectuals to decry bias in U.S. history classes, or for classical schools to replace Maya Angelou with Tacitus. If students are still receiving the material passively, a switch of content will not help, and, in the case of introducing classic literature, it will usually backfire. English teachers have soured multiple generations of Americans on Shakespeare because they taught it as propaganda, not as dense texts requiring complex thought.

Indoctrination In Common Core

Even changing curriculum will not prevent indoctrination. Curriculum should help guide the teacher to create lessons and use materials that will train the students to think and function independently. Instead, most public school curricula, either adopting the Common Core standards or imitating them, do the opposite.

Common Core has facilitated progressive indoctrination by smothering independent thought and stifling intellectual development. It effectively trains students not to think by emphasizing skills over content, process over product, and relative standards over absolute ones.

The humanities suffer the most from the focus on teaching supposedly practical skills rather than quality content. Instead of reading great poetry and literature, English teachers asked their students to read more journalistic nonfiction and develop research skills. Instead of reading for meaning and writing clearly, students read for bias and learn to write fluff.

History teachers now teach their students "history skills," which involve everything except remembering actual history and synthesizing information. Consequently, both literary and historical content is drained of relevance or meaning. While students learn to process data, they do not think about anything in particular.

Math and science are hurt more by Common Core's obsession with the process over the product. Reaching the right answer means little in Common Core math. It is more important that students learn various arbitrary methods through which they can arrive at an answer. Students receive more credit for following a needlessly complicated breakdown, complete with color-coding and an array of abstract terms, for relatively simple computation. Word problems also loom large, causing teachers to spend less time on their subject and more time teaching students to highlight the right terms.

Needless to say, some students can make their way through the Common Core curriculum without knowing much math or science at all. Common Core proponents will say that this teaches students "metacognition"--

thinking about thinking--and pushes students to learn how to learn. In reality, kids stop thinking, since it's all pointless.

These two problems come together to bring about a pervasive relativism in education. Content is interchangeable and mastery is either illusory or impossible. Knowledge becomes subjective. One text is as good as another. One period of history is as important as another. One theory or formula is as useful as another. It is hard to learn how to think when there is nothing real to think about.

In such a system, thinking is only the articulation of opinion; it has no bearing on truth. This means that people don't really need to think critically and understand why they believe what they do. They just need to have the right viewpoint and force others to conform like they've been forced to conform. They engage in arguments where the loudest voice wins because no one's points are better than another. They pressure instead of persuade.

This, in turn, leads to tribalism—groups of people united in feeling and opinion, but not in reason and truth. The lack of thought makes all these groups vulnerable to mass media and prevents any organized resistance to an encroaching state or lawless ideologue in power. Indoctrination is complete when perception (i.e., whatever is on the screen, whatever an “expert” says, whatever is popular) really does become reality for most people because they're too stupid or apathetic to respond rationally.

Good Teaching Is The Cure For Indoctrination

The only real solution to indoctrination, then, is good teachers. Good teachers (which include parents, mentors, and other knowledgeable adults) train students in methods of thought while supplying the stuff of thought. They teach a person to evaluate an argument properly, find actual solutions to problems, and determine what is true and what is false.

More importantly, they don't succumb to promoting one ideology over another because they trust their student to reason through to the right position. This was St. Augustine's argument in “On Christian Doctrine” (back when indoctrination meant teaching, not brainwashing), in which he recommended the inclusion of pagan learning in Christian education, trusting in the rational faith of the Christian scholar to handle it properly.

Only clear thought will be the death of foggy indoctrination. If people want to pass on their ideas on to the next generation, they should focus on building up logic, not just giving them the right texts to read and TV shows to watch. The goal should be to understand the reasons, not follow the signals of the right tribe.

At some point, indoctrination will always collapse on itself and leave mediocrity in its wake. Teaching, by contrast, is what will sustain our culture and bring out its virtues. It fosters the presence of active thought--not uniform thought--and it is what will ultimately mend and civilize our sorely divided country.

Auguste Meyrat is an English teacher in the Dallas area. He holds an MA in humanities and an MEd in educational leadership. He is the senior editor of The Everyman and has written essays for The Federalist, The American Conservative, and The Imaginative Conservative, as well as the Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture. Follow him on [Twitter](#).

THE EPOCH TIMES

Truth and Tradition

Chinese Regime Infiltrated US K–12 Education Through Deep Collaboration With College Board: Report

BY [CATHY HE](#)

September 10, 2020 Updated: September 12, 2020

The [College Board](#) has partnered closely with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) for over a decade, allowing Beijing to influence Chinese language and culture teaching in K–12 classrooms across the United States, according to a new report by the National Association of Scholars (NAS).

The [report](#) released on Sept. 6 found that the College Board, a New York-based nonprofit best known for administering the SAT and AP standardized exams for college admissions, worked with the CCP to develop an AP (Advanced Placement) Chinese language and culture course for high schools, helped [China](#) gain control over training for Chinese-language teaching in the country, and strongly promoted Beijing-funded Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms.

Billed as Chinese language and culture programs, Confucius Institutes and Classrooms have drawn heavy criticism over its role in spreading [Chinese propaganda](#) and suppressing free speech on college campuses and K–12 classrooms.

“China has managed to build out an entire educational system before the public caught on to what has happened,” report author and NAS senior research fellow Rachele Peterson said at the report’s [online launch](#) hosted by The Epoch Times’ “American Thought Leaders” program.

“It co-opted a prestigious respected name, the College Board, gaining an access it could never have earned outright by working from within organizations that Americans knew and trusted,” Peterson added.

The findings come amid heightened scrutiny over the CCP’s efforts to influence American universities, as well as its aggressive campaign to steal U.S. research and technology.

According to the report, in 2003, the College Board worked with Beijing to formulate the AP Chinese-language course, with the Chinese government covering half of the \$1.37 million development costs. In exchange, the regime was able to influence what was taught in the [high school](#) course, and push for instruction in simplified Chinese characters, Peterson said. After the CCP took power in China, it imposed simplified Chinese in the 1950s as part of an attempt to eradicate traditional culture embodied in traditional Chinese script. Traditional Chinese script is still used in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

“As a result, American students of Chinese would be unable to read the older, more traditional literature that [Party chairman] Mao [Zedong] had sought to supplant,” Peterson said.

The College Board also helped the CCP train American instructors who taught Chinese by partnering with it to host the National Chinese Language Conference, the largest annual gathering of Chinese-language educators in the country. The chief sponsor of the conference, organized by the College Board, is Hanban, an office with China's ministry of education that oversees Confucius Institutes around the world.

Peterson described this partnership as “perhaps one of the Chinese government’s most effective investments in American education,” and it has “effectively cornered the market on Chinese language instruction at the K–12 level in the United States.”

At the 2014 conference, College Board CEO David Coleman referred to Hanban as “the sun” whose light the College Board, “the moon,” was “so honored to reflect,” the report said.

The Board also collaborates with Hanban on its “Chinese Guest Teacher Program,” which creates “a pipeline of Chinese government-selected teachers flowing into American K–12 schools,” Peterson said. The visiting teacher program has brought more than 1,650 Chinese teachers to the United States since 2006.

In addition, the Board sponsored 20 Confucius Institutes and Classrooms. As of 2019, there were more than 500 Confucius Classrooms across K–12 grade schools, according to a U.S. Senate subcommittee report ([pdf](#)). There are currently around 67 Confucius Institutes at U.S. universities, according to the NAS’ estimates.

The U.S. state department in August designated the Confucius Institute U.S. Center, a D.C.-based organization that promotes Confucius Institutes and Classrooms, a diplomatic mission, saying it formed part of the CCP’s “global influence and propaganda apparatus.” Secretary of State Mike Pompeo recently expressed hope that all Confucius Institutes could be shut down by the end of this year.

The Chinese regime’s influence campaign involves “offering huge sums of money” to U.S. educational institutions, Peterson said.

“The College Board, colleges and universities, other institutions have found it incredibly convenient to be co-opted by the Chinese government because they’re being remunerated handsomely,” she said.

The College Board did not respond to a request for comment.

The NAS urged Congress to require the Board to cut ties with the CCP as a condition of it receiving federal funding. The Board has received \$116 million in federal funding since 2008, the report said.

The report also called the closure of Confucius Classrooms, and the replacement of the AP Chinese Language and Culture Test and the National Chinese Language Conference. The NAS recommended the departments of education and defense to convene a working group to prepare an alternative Chinese language and culture test.

The two departments did not specifically respond to a request for comment about these recommendations.

When Half Of NYC's Tax Base Leaves And Never Comes Back



Without anyone left to pay for the city, the Big Apple is headed for a failed state.

AUGUST 18, 2020

| **PETER VAN BUREN**

Steve Sanchez Photos/Shutterstock

The separateness in New York, and by extension much of the nation curled around it from America's eastern edge, stands out. There are the hyper-wealthy and there are the multi-generational poor. They depend on each other, but with COVID who needs who more has changed.

It's easy to stress how far apart the rich and the poor live, even though the mansions of the Upper West Side are less than a mile from the crack dealers uptown. The rich don't ride public transportation, they don't send their kids to public schools, they shop and dine in very different places with private security to ensure everything stays far enough apart to keep it all together.

But that misses the dependencies which until now have simply been a given in the ecosystem. The traditional view has been the rich need the poor to exploit as cheap labor—textbook economic inequality. But with COVID as the spark, the ticking bomb of economic inequality may soon go off in America's greatest city. Things are changing and New York, and by extension America, needs to ask itself what it wants to be when it grows up.

It's snapshot simple. The wealthy and the companies they work for pay most of the taxes. The poor consume most of the taxes through social programs. COVID is driving the wealthy and their offices out of the city. No one will be left to pay for the poor, who are stuck here, and the city will collapse in the transition. A classic failed state scenario.

New York City is home to 118 billionaires, more than any other American city. New York City is also home to nearly one million millionaires, more than any other city in the world. Among those millionaires some 8,865 are classified as "high net worth," with more than \$30 million each.

They pay the taxes. The top one percent of NYC taxpayers pay nearly 50 percent of all personal income taxes collected in New York. Personal income tax in the New York area accounts for 59 percent of all revenues. Property taxes add in more than a billion dollars a year in revenue, about half of that generated by office space.

Now for how the other half lives. Below those wealthy people in every sense of the word the city has the largest homeless population of any American metropolis, which includes 114,000 children. The number of New Yorkers living below the poverty line is larger than the population of Philadelphia, and would be the country's 7th largest city. More than 400,000 New Yorkers reside in public housing. Another 235,000 receive rent assistance.

That all costs a lot of money. The New York City Housing Authority needs \$24 billion over the next decade just for vital repairs. That's on top of a yearly standard operating cost approaching four billion dollars. A lot of the money used to come from Washington before a multibillion-dollar decline in federal Section 9 funds. So today there is a shortfall and repairs, including lead removal, are being put off. NYC also has a \$34 billion budget for public schools, many of which function as distribution points for child food aid, medical care, day care, and a range of social services.

The budget for a city as complex as New York is a mess of federal, state, and local funding sources. It can be sliced and diced many ways, but the one that matters is the starkest: the people and companies who pay for New York's poor are leaving even as the city is already facing a \$7.4 billion tax revenue hit from the initial effects of the coronavirus. The money is *there*; New York's wealthiest individuals have increased their net worth by \$44.9 billion during the pandemic. It's just not *here*.

New York's Governor Andrew Cuomo has seen a bit of the iceberg in the distance. He recently took to MSNBC to beg the city's wealthy, who fled the coronavirus outbreak, to return. Cuomo said he was extremely worried about New York City if too many of the well-heeled taxpayers who fled COVID decide there is no need to move back. "They are in their Hamptons homes, or Hudson Valley or Connecticut. I talk to them literally every day. I say. 'When are you coming back? I'll buy you a drink. I'll cook. But they're not coming back right now. And you know what else they're thinking, if I stay there, they pay a lower income tax because they don't pay the New York City surcharge. So, that would be a bad place if we had to go there."

Included in the surcharge are not only NYC's notoriously high taxes. The recent repeal of the federal allowance for state and local tax deductions (SALT) costs New York's high earners some \$15 billion in additional federal taxes annually.

"They don't want to come back to the city," Partnership for NYC President Kathryn Wylde warned. "It's hard to move a company... but it's much easier for individuals to move," she said, noting that most offices plan to allow remote work indefinitely. "It's a big concern that we're going to lose more of our tax base than we've already lost."

While overall only five percent of residents left as of May, in the city's very wealthiest blocks residential population decreased by 40 percent or more. The higher-earning a neighborhood is, the more likely it is to have emptied out. Even the amount of trash collected in wealthy neighborhoods has dropped, a tell-tale sign no one is home. A real estate agent told me she estimates about a third of the apartments even in my

mid-range 300 unit building are empty. The ones for sale or rent attract few customers. She says it's worse than post-9/11 because at least then the mood was "How do we get NYC back on its feet?" instead of now, when we just stand over the body and tsk tsk through our masks.

Enough New Yorkers are running toward the exits that it has shaken up the greater area's housing market. Another real estate agent describes the frantic bidding in the nearby New Jersey suburbs as a "blood sport." "We are seeing 20 offers on houses. We are seeing things going 30 percent over the asking price. It's kind of insane."

Fewer than one-tenth of Manhattan office workers came back to the workplace a month after New York gave businesses the green light to return to the buildings they ran from in March. Having had several months to notice what not paying Manhattan office rents might do for their bottom line, large companies are leaving. Conde Nast, the publishing company and majority client in the signature new World Trade Center, is moving out. Even the iconic paper *The Daily News* (which published the famous headline "Ford to City: Drop Dead" when New York collapsed in 1975 without a federal bailout) closed its physical newsroom to go virtual. Despite the folksy image of New York as a paradise of Mom and Pop restaurants and quaint shops, about 50 percent of those who pay most of the taxes work for large firms.

Progressive pin-up Mayor De Blasio has lost touch with his city. After years of failing to address economic inequality by simply throwing free money to the poor and limiting the ability of the police to protect them, and us, from rising crime, his COVID focus has been on shutting down schools and converting 139 luxury hotels to filthy homeless shelters. Alongside AOC, he has called for higher taxes on fewer people and demanded more federal funds. As for the wealthy who have paid for his failed social justice experiments to date, he says "We don't make decisions based on a wealthy few. Some may be fair-weathered friends, but they will be replaced by others."

What others? The concentration of major corporations once pulled talent to the city from across the globe; if you wanted to work for JP Morgan on Wall Street, you had to live here. That's why NYC has skyscrapers; a lot of people once needed to live and especially work in the same place. Not any more. Technology and work-at-home changes have eliminated geography.

For the super wealthy, New York once topped the global list of desirable places to live based on four factors: wealth, investment, lifestyle and future. The first meant a desire to live among other wealthy people (we know where that's headed), investment returns on real estate (not looking great, if you can even find a buyer), lifestyle (now destroyed with bars, restaurants, shopping, museums, and theaters closed indefinitely, coupled with rising crime) and...

The future. New York pre-COVID had the highest projected GDP growth of any city. Now we're left with the question if COVID continues to hollow out the city, who will be left to pay for New York? As one commentator said, NYC risks leading America into becoming "Brazil with Nukes," a future of constant political and social chaos, with a ruling class content to wall itself off from the greater society's problems.

New York City battled back the coronavirus. Now it's struggling to pay for it.

By Tony Romm
August 28

New York Mayor Bill de Blasio has petitioned the state for the authority to borrow as much as \$5 billion to pay for the city's operating costs. (Mark Kautlarich/Bloomberg News)

City leaders are still waiting for Washington to help them avoid thousands of potential layoffs. The coronavirus outbreak that swept through New York City this spring has left a crippling financial crisis in its wake, as local leaders warn they may have no choice but to make huge cuts to transit, education, emergency response and a torrent of other government services unless they receive billions of dollars in new aid.

As soon as Monday, about 22,000 municipal workers here could receive pink slips informing them that they will be laid off in October unless New York City can identify other ways to help close its approximately \$8 billion revenue gap. The looming cuts may not spare even some front-line first responders, lawmakers and union leaders say, illustrating the magnitude of the budget crisis facing the country's largest metropolis.

Adding to New York's woes, hotel stays are down, millions are working remotely or out of a job entirely and as many as one-third of its 230,000 small businesses could close for good, according to the Partnership for New York City, a nonprofit organization that represents local firms. The devastation has left no part of the economy untouched, even hamstringing the sprawling network of bus and train lines that make up the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Without a \$12 billion cash infusion, MTA leaders sounded their own dire alarm this week: They may have to scale back some services as much as 40 percent, leaving riders facing longer waits and postponing some sorely needed repairs to the subway's aging infrastructure.

Even in a quarrelsome city like New York, there's widespread agreement about a solution: additional help from Washington, where federal lawmakers have spent months discussing the need to authorize billions of dollars for cash-strapped local governments that saw revenue decline precipitously as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

But that money increasingly seems out of reach for New York and thousands of states, counties, cities and towns nationwide facing their own financial headaches. Drastic measures once viewed as unlikely doomsday scenarios have become more real and urgent, threatening not only the day-to-day functions of New York City, but also the millions of people it serves.

"In July, I was cautiously optimistic," MTA Chairman Patrick Foye said about the prospect of help from Washington. "Obviously that cautious optimism proved to be wrong. The federal government on these issues looks to be broken."

Once the coronavirus arrived in the United States, it delivered a crippling blow to New York, turning the city's density into a deadly vector for infection. Shutdowns ordered by Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo (D) and other leaders brought the city to an abrupt halt, arresting the spread of the virus at the cost of the state's economy.

The financial pain has been particularly pronounced in New York City. Broadway went dark this spring, and even as the outbreak wanes, theaters haven't been able to revive operations safely. Major events that bring travelers to the city annually, from concerts and baseball games to the U.N. General Assembly, have been canceled or postponed. Some restaurants that shuttered never reopened. Some offices that sent their employees home never brought them back. And some workers who lost jobs were never rehired in a city where the unemployment rate last month hovered around 20 percent, data show.

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De Blasio declined to be interviewed for this story. His spokesman, Bill Neidhardt, said in a statement that they are negotiating with leaders in Albany on a potential solution. Absent that, he said, the widespread cuts to the city's workforce would have "direct effects across New York, dragging down the largest city and economic engine in the country."

This week, the mayor and the city's unions signaled that they could still agree to forestall them, perhaps through cuts to municipal workers' hours, pay or benefits. But it won't be easy on the employees it affects, nor will it spell the end of New York's crisis. With the state facing its own budget shortfall, lawmakers in Albany could cut off some funding to the city and other municipalities. That could compound the pain in areas such as education, forcing New York City schools to cut 9,000 jobs, the chancellor of the public school system, Richard Carranza, has said in recent days. The New York City Department of Education did not respond to a request for comment.

Similar budget pressures loom over the MTA, which relies heavily on fares and tax revenue to pay for operations. With ridership severely depressed, the system is in need of \$12 billion through 2021. Foye, the MTA chairman, delivered the grim news during a presentation Wednesday to the transit agency's board, just weeks after two credit-rating agencies downgraded the MTA's ratings in response to its deteriorating finances.

"The effect on ridership and revenues is substantially worse than the Great Depression," he said in an interview.

Subway ridership at the peak of the coronavirus crisis fell by 95 percent, Foye said, and remains down by 75 percent in August. The MTA has considered hiking fares and implementing service reductions, including those that help the elderly and people with disabilities use the transit system. The MTA is likely to require layoffs, cuts to maintenance and the cancellation of planned expansions of the subway system, including a line that runs under Second Avenue that is years behind schedule.

The magnitude of the financial pain has added urgency to New York City's pleas for money. De Blasio has petitioned the state for the authority to borrow as much as \$5 billion to pay for the city's operating costs. "That is the cleanest, fastest way to avert the layoffs," the mayor said at a news conference Tuesday.

The idea has at times received an icy reception in Albany, where an oversight board has kept watch over New York City's finances since it faced the prospect of bankruptcy in the 1970s. Like many cities struggling to cover the costs of the coronavirus, New York must confront the reality that bonds and other financing mechanisms eventually will come due — and could result in unanticipated cuts to city services or tax increases on residents to pay it back.

"Long-term debt for operations should always be a near or last resort," said Andrew Rein, the president of the Citizens Budget Commission, a fiscally conservative organization that has opposed the mayor's proposal on borrowing. "It pushes off current bills to future taxpayers. ... It locks up money in future budgets."

On Capitol Hill, meanwhile, New York City's pleas for federal aid have failed to shake federal lawmakers from their months-long stalemate. House Democrats included \$1 trillion for cash-strapped cities and states, as well as billions of dollars in additional money for transit systems, as part of the coronavirus relief package adopted earlier this year. But Senate Republicans balked at that plan, opting to provide far less for local governments and zero new dollars for transportation agencies beyond what Washington already has provided. The GOP's opposition is rooted in the belief that only Democratic-led cities and states are in need of federal assistance

New York's leaders are quick to point out that the city had been hiring, spending and growing before the coronavirus decimated its coffers. Foye said the MTA entered the year with an \$80 million operating surplus. It benefited from more than \$3 billion in federal coronavirus relief but exhausted the money in July as revenue continued to fall during the pandemic.

"It has become so political in the sense of blue states versus red states. We don't do that with a hurricane or a storm," said Rep. Max Rose (D-N.Y.), whose congressional district includes part of Brooklyn. "That conversation never happens. Why is it happening now?"

How Google's Monopoly Power Took Over Mobile Search Traffic – Even on Apple iPhones



3 Aug 2020

[BY ALLUM BOKHARI](#)

Last week, Breitbart News revealed that Google Search is interfering in the election, purging links to conservative websites from its search results, including a complete purge of Breitbart News links from searches related to Joe Biden. The blacklisting of conservatives sources becomes even more serious in light of Google's status as the default search engine on every smartphone in

America — a monopoly on searches that Google pays Apple \$1.5 billion to maintain.

Google's purge of Breitbart News and other conservative sites is likely to have an enormous impact on undecided voters, because for most people using the internet, Google is effectively the only search engine that exists. A small minority of web users use competitors like Bing, Yahoo!, and DuckDuckGo, but this is negligible — in 2020, Google processed a whopping 91 percent of all internet searches.

This is in no small part due to Google's anti-competitive practices in the smartphone market. In addition to its own Android phones, where every service is switched to Google by default, the search engine has also wormed its way into Apple iPhones.

Thanks to its vast revenues, Google is able to pay Apple billions of dollars (it was \$1.5 billion last year alone) to be the default search engine on Safari, Apple's web browser that serves as the default option for iPhone, iPad, and Mac users.

This gives Google a breathtaking level of market dominance on search in the smartphone market.

While there used to be many smartphone operating systems, including Blackberry OS and even a version of Windows for phones, in recent years the market has become concentrated in the hands of just two companies: Apple and Google. And when the latter pays the former to do its bidding, it arguably dwindles to just one in some regards.

Between the two Silicon Valley giants, Apple and Google control over 99 percent of the worldwide smartphone operating systems market. Check your own phone — if you bought it in the past five years, it is almost certainly running Google's Android OS or Apple's iOS. There is simply nothing else.

This Apple-Google duopoly means that the two companies can decide to exclude whatever competing platform they choose from the smartphone app marketplace. Free speech-friendly social network Gab was a prominent victim of this, getting banned from both Google and Apple's app stores over "hate speech."

It also means that Google, through its billion-dollar payoffs to Apple, gets to be the default search engine on 99 percent of the world's smartphones.

If you're technically savvy, you might be able to switch the default browser to DuckDuckGo or some other competitors. But how many people do that? Crucially, how many undecided voters, those most vulnerable to being unwittingly manipulated by Google, do that?

The answer is, almost done. This means that, as we enter the final stretch of the 2020 election season, voters searching for information about Joe Biden and the 2020 election on their smartphone browsers are going to be met with a cascade of anti-Trump, pro-Biden propaganda from the mainstream media.

This could have a huge impact on voters' decision-making come election day. Psychologist and search engine expert Dr. Robert Epstein, who has closely followed Google's growing political bias, recently told Breitbart News's Alex Marlow that Google is likely to shift ten percent of voters away from Trump to fulfill its executives' stated goal of avoiding a repeat of 2016.

This top-down interference in the democratic election, from a tech giant with unprecedented control over the information Americans receive, subject to zero public oversight, is going to raise far greater questions about the integrity of the 2020 election than "Russian interference" ever did in 2016.



Break Up Google

By [Erick Erickson](#)

June 19, 2020

Google has reached a level of monopolization that needs to be taken seriously as a threat to freedom, the free exchange of ideas and political diversity. Follow along with the logic of your average "woke" Google employee. These employees have been openly arguing for a few years now that Google needs a diverse array of employees shaping Google's algorithms, or Google will only present to consumers certain information that might exclude diverse views or information.

Concurrently, these same employees have argued that Google need not entertain conservative thoughts or ideas. It was not that long ago that Google employees revolted at the idea of Kay Cole James, a black female and president of the Heritage Foundation, sitting on a Google advisory board designed to ensure diversity in Google's artificial intelligence practices.

Google's employees want diversity, but not ideological diversity. They believe diversity is needed to shape access to information through Google, but they want to deny any ideological diversity in the process of shaping. Google controls over 90% of search engine activity. With a "diverse" group of people who lack intellectual diversity, Google can restrict access to information that offends its hired gatekeepers. Google controls over 70% of the market share of advertising online. Over the years, Google has bought up major competitors and then leveraged its dominance to both grow its ad business and hurt its competitors. According to The Wall Street Journal, in an experiment last year, Nexstar Media Group Inc. tried to get out of Google's ad network and saw not only a revenue dive but also a dive across access to the company's data because Google has so integrated its ad business, ad generation business and search business.

This past week, a reporter at NBC News attempted to have The Federalist removed from Google's ad network. The Federalist is a conservative website that had the audacity to run a story critical of the media. The NBC News reporter actually flagged The Federalist due to a comment left by a random commenter. Google made The Federalist delete its comments section to keep revenue flowing.

In the past year, with my own website, The Resurgent, I have received notices from Google that posts at The Resurgent related to guns and other issues have all run afoul of Google's policies. In fact, Google routinely uses its position to demonetize conservatives who might write about guns or other matters. They starve sites of cash, and there are no comparable competitors to go to. On top of that, left-wing agitators have a sympathetic ear at Google, and Google is more likely to target sites on the right than the left. An NBC News reporter, who had previously been a left-wing activist for the U.K. Labour Party, found a sympathetic person at Google to demonetize a conservative news and opinion site because of a random commenter in a comments section. One wonders if Google will demonetize The New York Times because of Sen. Tom Cotton's op-ed. Don't hold your breath.

That Google can use its monopoly to force websites to delete content or else be penalized is a dangerous thing, particularly when Google is so willing to target conservatives.

Google's search dominance is akin to Microsoft's dominance with Internet Explorer that forced antitrust action against Microsoft. Likewise, Google's control of over 70% of online advertising is depriving the marketplace of competition. Google is now using its Chrome browser to compel changes to the open internet, becoming a new Internet Explorer, where people must use Google's browser to render sites properly and, with that, let Google track them. The time has come for serious bipartisan investigations into breaking apart Google. If Google can use its position to censor others and harm them financially while ensuring a departure from Google causes even further harm, Google is too big. It is easy to say sites can go elsewhere and do not have to use Google. But there is nowhere on the internet one can go to truly escape Google without significant sacrifice in accessibility or revenue. It is time to break it up and prohibit it from controlling the content of other sites.

WeChat and TikTok taking China censorship global, study says



Much of the content censored on WeChat supports pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong. | REUTERS

Sep 9, 2020

The most popular Chinese-owned social media from WeChat to TikTok are increasingly censoring content in the U.S. and elsewhere, taking practices honed for years behind the Great Firewall to an international audience.

ByteDance Ltd.'s TikTok often buries or hides words that reflect political movements, gender and sexual orientation or religion in most countries where it operates, the Australian Strategic Policy Institute said in a report released Tuesday. Most of the content censored on WeChat supported pro-democracy activists in Hong Kong, as well as messages from the U.S. and U.K. embassies regarding a new national security law enacted by Beijing at the end of June that has provoked protests across the city.

TikTok, which began as a place where teens lip-sync to music, has become a forum for political protest including the Black Lives Matter movement, said Fergus Ryan, one of the authors. Hashtags related to LGBT issues were also suppressed in several languages, according to the report. Other topics censored in the past included criticism of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The findings may lend ammunition to the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump, which banned TikTok and Tencent Holdings Ltd.'s WeChat after accusing the apps of bending to Beijing's will in censoring content, potentially influencing the November U.S. elections. While social media services like Facebook scrub content such as hate speech, Washington accuses services like TikTok of blocking content considered sensitive to the Communist Party. WeChat has long complied with controls back home, while TikTok — which operates only outside China — has pushed back against claims it's influenced by that country's government.

“TikTok is a more curated experience where the platform has a huge amount of power to decide what content to serve up to users,” said Ryan. “Most of these hashtags are categorized in TikTok's code in the same way that terrorist groups, illicit substances and swear words are treated on the platform.”

A Tencent representative declined to comment. The Australian institute cited TikTok as saying some terms “were partially restricted due to relevant local laws.” It was also cited as saying it “strongly supports our LGBTQ

creators around the world, and is proud that LGBTQ content is among the most popular category on the platform with billions of views.”

“As we’ve said before, TikTok user data is stored in the U.S. and Singapore, with strict controls on employee access,” a TikTok spokesperson said. “We have never shared user information with the Chinese government, and wouldn’t do so if asked.”

Washington’s moves against TikTok and WeChat underscore how the concept of an internet decoupling is becoming reality. The Trump administration’s ban on TikTok and WeChat takes effect in mid-September, when both apps are likely to get taken off app stores but may continue to be accessible to many American users. WeChat can be a powerful vector in countries like the U.S. where the Chinese diaspora is substantial, because it is often a major source of information for that population.

But principles like free speech do not form part of those apps’ core values, rather they’re more likely to over-censor to align with local government wishes, according to the report.

ByteDance is now embroiled in sensitive discussions about a TikTok takeover in the U.S. with suitors including Microsoft Corp. and Oracle Corp., a deal estimated to fetch upwards of \$20 billion (about ¥2.1 trillion). But uncertainty around the deal escalated sharply last week after China asserted its right to approve or block the sale of technology abroad, complicating an already complex process under scrutiny from the White House. The law underscored how Beijing wants to retain some control over content moderation and that it considers ByteDance’s algorithms to be a matter of state security, Ryan said.

“The rubber really hits the road with the algorithm,” he said. “TikTok’s algorithms are extremely sophisticated and powerful.”

Party, Propaganda, and Revolutionary Silence

It is time to speak the truth about the reality of what the country is experiencing.

By Richard Higgins • August 4, 2020

The American people are enduring a withering bombardment of propaganda from a corporate-owned media that is beholden to financial interests, including interests that benefit from legacy trade policies with Communist China.

Propaganda is a weapon of warfare abroad, and propaganda is a weapon of tyranny at home.

Propaganda works.

The tactics used and the target selection determines its overall level of effectiveness. Today, propaganda tactics are ubiquitous in the 24/7 social media-fueled frenzy. Today's target is the American people. Fear amplification and false expectations are the messages. Divide and conquer is the ethos.

Propaganda tactics and methods have so saturated the national discourse that it is difficult to discern reality from falsehood, truth from fiction, or deceit from honesty.

The situation is exacerbated by the lack of critical thinking skills among the younger segment of the population. Subjects like logic—and hence logical fallacies—argumentation, metacognition, etc. aren't required course work at any level of public schooling.

This makes our entire population—our children and young adults in particular—easy marks for propaganda.

As a corollary to the propaganda, the broad censorship across the media and social media platforms serves to further the confusion by eliminating honest debate or exposure to alternative viewpoints. America once prided herself on free speech and open and honest debate.

Today, we have a news media that publicly applauds censorship historically associated with states like China, North Korea, and the former Soviet Union.

As a result, a general state of induced confusion and fear affects our citizens and officials alike.

In the Soviet Union, the residents used to joke, “in the news there is not truth, and in the truth, there is no news.” How the mighty United States of America has fallen.

The principle goal of information warfare is confusing your adversary and concealing your intentions. This is achieved by controlling your target’s perception of reality. The American people’s perception of reality has been under assault for decades and this has only intensified since Donald Trump dared to challenge the myriad interests hollowing out America for profit.

After a decades-long effort to control language and to censor speech, it is not surprising that many inside the Trump Administration struggle to frame accurately the violence plaguing the country. To be artificially limited to describing reality using only acceptable words is like tying your shoes with boxing gloves. In matters pertaining to national security, an inability to define reality is lethal.

For example, in Attorney General William Barr’s recent House Judiciary testimony, he stated that the attacks on courthouses and federal facilities are attacks on the U.S. government. Barr stopped short, however, of naming these attacks as part of the wider Marxist Revolutionary insurrection. This artificial constraint in language complicates and inhibits the deployment of needed personnel and capabilities to quell the violence. These constraints remain self-enforced on the part of many American officials, even when faced with affirmative confirmation and facts.

Until our senior-most political leaders are willing to name the threat and accurately depict reality with their language, their political underlings and constituents, many of whom know that something is wrong, will remain afraid, confused, and disenfranchised.

Former Secretary of State John Kerry and the presumptive Democratic nominee for president, Joe Biden, both recently called for “revolution.” Believe them. Bombs, assaults, fires, and riots occur daily. Believe those, too.

The elements of revolutionary insurrection are clear for all to see. Cadres on the street, deceptive narratives in the media, and a shadow government choosing *de facto* presidential candidates under the rubric of a vice-presidential selection process. It is not enough simply to point out the lawless tactics or the inaction of local leaders. The Democratic Party leaders, public officials, and their media allies are fomenting revolutionary insurrection, with clearly stated goals including the dissolution of the U.S. government and the elimination of the America First agenda and its proponents.

The steps taken to end the violence thus far have been measured and halting. While politically comfortable, these steps fall far short of what is necessary to prevent the collapse of society. To address these issues reactively through the prism of racial inequality or police brutality is to yield to the Marxists' narrative. This forces Americans to defend America with the weapons and fighting positions chosen by their adversaries.

Government officials sworn to protect and defend against all enemies foreign and domestic, but beholden to the Marxist narrative, fight with rules of engagement defined by our enemy at the time and place of the enemy's choosing. This is a catastrophic error. A brief look at the history of the 20th century exposes this folly. This is a key indicator of how bad the surrender to the narrative is—FBI agents kneeling, in uniform, to Marxist rioters during the Washington, D.C. riots. Whether they were told to by someone in authority or chose to do so on their own is not relevant. What is relevant is that it happened. A mighty citadel of anti-communism—the FBI—has fallen. They are not the only pillar of our defenses to have collapsed. Marxism and its progeny are the single greatest threat to humanity that exists. Democrat leaders are fomenting revolutionary insurrection. This is clear, not only from their words and actions, but also through their inaction.

The propaganda and purposeful violence will continue through the election, of this there is little doubt. To put a point on it: if nothing else, it serves as a tool of voter suppression. Threats of violence at the polls will keep many from voting. If they aren't already, the Justice Department (and the Department of Defense for that matter) should be planning for an explosion of violent protests to “spontaneously erupt” around November 1 that will last through the election. We must be prepared to ensure that everyone can safely vote without fear of violence, intimidation, or retribution. This propaganda, violence, and destruction done by the Marxist revolutionary insurrectionists belongs to the Democratic Party. Not one Democrat has denounced the violence to date. Not one Democrat has gone on camera and denounced Antifa or Black Lives Matter for their Marxist beliefs. And not one reporter has even asked them to do so.

The mainstream journalists' complicity allows and enables the devolution of the social contract by not holding the Democrats accountable for empowering and excusing political violence and domestic terrorism. The institutions charged with preventing this violence have proven inadequate to the task. It is past time to develop a “get well” plan for our institutions. It is time to speak the truth about the reality of what the country is experiencing. It is time for the American people to demand that our elected leaders fight back at the federal, state, and local levels. It is past time for the Trump Administration and all our elected leaders to prepare for a possible escalation.



Issue: August 26, 2020

By [Cindy Harper](#)

The WHO is monitoring online conversations and emotions, using “social listening” to change COVID narratives

The World Health Organization is collaborating with an analytics company to scan people’s social media conversations for “coronavirus misinformation;” something the WHO calls “social listening.”

The global health organization says that it’s not only fighting the pandemic but also the conversations people are having about it.

According to the WHO, there’s an “infodemic” – an overload and spread of misleading information, so much so that it decided that to tackle misinformation, it needs to employ various tools, including social listening, with machine learning monitoring.

“Countering fake news or rumors is actually only responding or mitigating when it’s too late,” said Tim Nguyen, a technology expert helping the WHO’s unit titled Information Network for Epidemics (EPI-WIN). “What we’ve put in place in the beginning of the pandemic is what we call a social listening approach.”

The company has been creepily scanning more than 1.6 million social media posts each week to monitor online conversation. It then uses machine learning to classify information into four topics; cause, illness, interventions, and treatments. The WHO’s aim is to learn the coronavirus topics that are gaining popularity so that it can then create its own content to counteract and attempt to change the narrative.

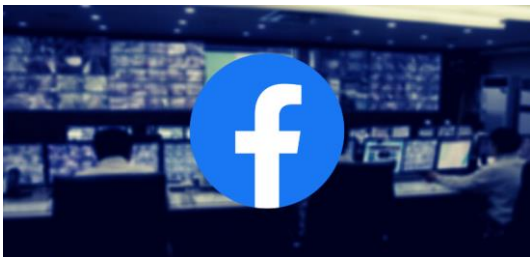
The WHO’s “social listening” goes beyond analyzing people’s conversations for content, it also tries to analyze their emotions. Through language analytics, the technology detects emotions such as sadness, acceptance, denial, and anxiety. With such insights, the WHO hopes to come up with effective strategies to adjust coronavirus narratives.

“What we’ve learned now, after two and a half months of doing this kind of analysis, is that there are recurring themes and topics that are coming back over and over again,” Nguyen explained. “What that means to us is that we need to re-push information at different times. People may not understand it the first time when we push it, but when the questions and issues come up later, it means it’s time to push it out again.”

The health organization recognizes that not everyone has access to social media. So, it is working with the UN Global Pulse to use AI and big data to apply social listening to radios, which are the most common source of information for people without access to the internet. The UN Global Pulse is already applying social listening in Uganda, where they try to tackle rumors that coronavirus can be treated with natural remedies.

“You need to have a certain degree of good information out there to reach populations so that they are inoculated and not susceptible to fake news or disinformation. We believe we need to vaccinate 30% of the population with ‘good information’ in order to have a certain degree of ‘herd’ immunity against misinformation,” Nguyen said.

Issue: September 11, 2020



Police in Australia monitor social media for lockdown dissent

By Cindy Harper

Australian police are scouring social media, searching keywords that will help them to crack down on those who are planning to violate the country’s strict lockdown rules.

Australian citizens who are concerned that the lockdowns are an affront to civil liberties are increasingly finding it difficult to get their voices heard. When they post on Facebook, the posts often get deleted. When they protest in public, they get arrested.

But it’s not just Facebook’s moderators that citizens have to contend with; police in Australia are also using social media to look for forms of dissent and to pick out those who are recommending that people air their grievances in public. People are being arrested for “incitement” over their Facebook posts.

A pregnant woman, Zoe Lee Buhler, who was arrested for posting an anti-lockdown post on Facebook, called on leaders to apologize over the incident – and another, James Bartolo, told others to avoid pro-protest posts on social media after police bashed in his front door for his support of anti-lockdown protests on Facebook.

There is an anti-lockdown protest planned for Saturday in Melbourne, where protesters will obviously break social distancing rules.

The “Freedom Walk” in Melbourne is set to begin at 11 am, according to a schedule doing the rounds on social media. However, the turnout might be low, considering Facebook removed the event a few days ago.

The government has deemed this protest unlawful, and the police are expected to be on high alert, paying particular attention to those who they have identified on social media in advance.

Yesterday, during a press briefing, Victorian Assistant Commissioner of the Police, Luke Cornelius, said that the protesters are “selfish” and forcing the police to “keep doing this.”

“I feel a bit like a dog returning to eat his own vomit. I’m sick of it,” a dejected Cornelius said. “...Don’t take us for fools. We’ll have no hesitation in issuing fines.”

The Premier of Victoria also urged people not to participate in the protests.

“All you’re potentially doing is spreading the virus,” said Premier Daniel Andrews.

A similar protest held last Saturday led to the arrest of 17 individuals and over 160 fines. However, the police have a long road ahead since posts on social platforms suggest that the anti-lockdown rallies will be held every Saturday until the government lifts the restrictions and so it’s social media where police will pay extra attention to.

Issue: September 22, 2020



Pushing election “misinformation” online is about to be a criminal offense in California

By [Didi Rankovic](#)

California Democrats have gone out of their way to punish users on social media platforms expressing their doubts or criticism of the US voting system allowing and, as of late, expanding the right of voters to mail-in their ballots in the November presidential vote.

In another era, we might be tempted to call this type of thing and the stern language its expressed in as something coming from “the Thought Police”:

“If you’re putting out tweets, Facebook posts or using social and other types of media to intentionally mislead voters about their right and ability to vote by mail, that’s now a crime, and it’s my hope local DA’s and the state attorney general will go after violators the moment they see them,” Democrat Henry Stern said of the legislation, SB 739, that was signed into state law by the California governor on Friday.

MORE..

On April 19, 2020, Google, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter began censoring any "misinformation" on their platforms regarding the coronavirus pandemic.

Schiff suggests Google, YouTube and Twitter notify users who engaged with coronavirus misinformation
<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/apr/30/schiff-suggests-google-youtube-and-twitter-notify-/>

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TikTok: Spy in your child's pocket
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Ivy League Schools Self-Censor For China
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Iowa State Prof Forbids student to disagree with BLM, abortion. University takes action
https://www.theblaze.com/news/leftist-iowa-state-prof-forbids-disagreement?utm_source=theblaze-dailyPM&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Daily-Newsletter_PM%202020-08-18&utm_term=TheBlaze%20Daily%20PM%20-%20last%2070%20days

Woke revolutionaries are mostly rich kids playing at radicalism
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<https://nypost.com/2020/09/20/f-k-cuomo-and-de-blasio-mural-painted-on-brooklyn-street/>

Manhattan is boarded up.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bpplzwrZLAY>

How to Steal and Election

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Billionaires Rake in the Big Bucks

<https://bigleaguepolitics.com/billionaires-rake-in-the-big-bucks-while-regular-americans-suffer-from-an-economic-downturn/>

10 TIKTOK MARKETING CAMPAIGNS: HOW BRANDS ARE USING TIKTOK INFLUENCERS

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