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# Disinformation Case Negative

# **1NC Frontlines**

## 1NC Russia Advantage Answers

**1. Russia's cyber technology is too weak now. Their attacks are failing and they are too busy with Ukraine to be a threat.**

**Wolff 2022**

("Why Russia Hasn't Launched Major Cyber Attacks Since the Invasion of Ukraine," Josephine Wolff, associate professor of cybersecurity policy at The Fletcher School at Tufts University, March 2, 2022, <https://time.com/6153902/russia-major-cyber-attacks-invasion-ukraine/>, VY)

**As tensions escalated between Russia and Ukraine, many people were expecting the conflict to have significant cyber components**—the United States Department of Homeland Security even issued a warning to businesses to be on high alert for Russian cyberattacks, as did the U.K.'s National Cyber Security Centre. **What is surprising is that**—so far, at least—**the devastating Russian cyberattacks everyone has been expecting have yet to materialize.** There's no guarantee, of course, that a large-scale cyberattack on Ukraine's electrical grid or global banks or anything else isn't just around the corner. Russia has proven time and again that it has few compunctions about targeting critical infrastructure and causing considerable collateral damage through acts of cyber aggression. But as the invasion continues with few signs of any sophisticated cyber conflict, **it seems less and less likely that Russia has significant cyber capabilities in reserve, ready to deploy if needed. Instead, it begins to look like Russia's much vaunted cyber capabilities have been neglected in recent years, in favor of developing less expensive, less effective cyber weapons that cause less widespread damage and are considerably easier to contain and defend against.** For instance, many of the cyberattacks directed at Ukraine in the past month have been relatively basic distributed denial-of-service attacks, in which hackers bombard Ukrainian government websites and servers with so much online traffic that those servers cannot respond to legitimate users and are forced offline for some period of time. Denial-of-service attacks can be effective for short-term disruptions but they're hardly a new or impressive cyber capability—in fact, they're what Russia used to target Estonia more than a decade ago in 2007. Moreover, launching these types of attacks requires no sophisticated technical capabilities or discovery of new vulnerabilities, and they typically have fairly contained impacts on the specific, targeted computers. Similarly, recent reports that Belarusian hackers are trying to phish European officials using compromised accounts belonging to Ukrainian armed services members suggests that **not only are these efforts relying on fairly basic tactics like phishing emails, they are not even being carried out by Russian military hackers directly.**

***<2. The attacks in the evidence are from rogue hackers who already bypass security systems now. Since they are not part of a military, NATO's deterrence won't solve.>***

### **3. The status quo solves for hackers – the Justice Department has increased resources to prevent and investigate hacks.**

#### **Jenkins 2021**

("Justice Dept. to give ransomware attacks same priority as terrorism," Cameron Jenkins - 06/03/21, <https://thehill.com/policy/national-security/556739-justice-dept-to-give-ransomware-attacks-same-priority-as-terrorism>)

**The Justice Department announced this week that it will begin elevating ransomware investigations to a similar level of priority as terrorist attacks.** John Carlin, the acting deputy attorney general at the Justice Department, told Reuters on Thursday that **the federal government will prioritize ransomware cases through a new process. "It's a specialized process to ensure we track all ransomware cases regardless of where it may be referred in this country, so you can make the connections between actors and work your way up to disrupt the whole chain,"** he said. According to Reuters, guidance to U.S. attorney's offices nationwide on Thursday advised that **all information regarding any ransomware cases be sent to a recently formed task force based in Washington, D.C.** The Hill has reached out to the Justice Department for comment. **The move follows a ransomware attack against Colonial Pipeline and other entities in the U.S. in recent weeks.** Colonial Pipeline, which provides roughly 45 percent of the fuel consumed on the East Coast, faced a cyberattack last month that left many states in the southeast with gasoline shortages. A cyber criminal group that federal authorities traced to Russia was able to infiltrate Colonial Pipeline's systems and demand a ransom. The company paid the hackers \$4.4 million in order to have control of the systems returned to them. **"To ensure we can make necessary connections across national and global cases and investigations, and to allow us to develop a comprehensive picture of the national and economic security threats we face, we must enhance and centralize our internal tracking,"** read the federal guidance obtained by Reuters. Carlin told the news outlet that **officials have "used this model around terrorism before but never with ransomware," saying it reflected how the federal government is further prioritizing such attacks.** U.S. attorney's offices operating under the new guidance will be required to share updated ransomware attack case details as well as active technical information with the Justice Department.

***<4. Their evidence gives no warrant as to how increased NATO cybersecurity will decrease the risk of Russian attacks. Either the US is sufficiently protected OR new efforts will fail for the same reason past ones did.>***

## 5. Turn: If United States increases cyber protections, Russia will attack.

### Melendez 2022

("What a Russian cyberattack on the U.S. could look like and how it could affect you," Steven Melendez, Fast Company February 25, 2022, <https://www.fastcompany.com/90725292/what-a-russian-cyberattack-on-the-u-s-could-look-like-and-how-it-could-affect-you>, NAUDL)

**As President Biden intensifies sanctions against Russia in response to the invasion of Ukraine, experts warn that cyberattacks against public and private targets in the United States are a possibility. The Department of Homeland Security this week warned U.S. organizations to be prepared for a cyberattack,** though DHS Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said there is no "specific credible cyber threat" against the U.S. homeland. **Officials in the U.K. issued a similar warning.** Government and banking sites in Ukraine are believed to have already been hit by Russian digital attacks. Exactly what form any hacks in the U.S. may take remains to be seen: CNN reports that the **FBI warned local governments and companies to be on the watch for ransomware. Ransomware attacks, like the one that crippled the Colonial Pipeline last year—causing sporadic gasoline shortages—are typically launched by independent hackers in Russia trying to make money, not by government agents. But ransomware groups typically operate with some tacit approval from the regime of Vladimir Putin, and the Russian government may be more tolerant of hacks on major Western targets if tensions continue to ramp up.** Since so much infrastructure is tied to networked computers that can be deliberately or unintentionally targeted by ransomware, such attacks in the past have disrupted everything from the fuel pipeline to shipping to schools and hospitals. **Even attacks on Ukrainian targets could unintentionally spread malware to computers in the U.S. and other countries as happened with the NotPetya ransomware attack in 2017, which chiefly targeted Ukrainian computers but caused havoc around the world.**

*<6. They have no internal link why Russian CYBER attacks escalate, only why conventional attacks escalate. Because cyber criminals are often rogue, there is no way to blame it on the Russia MILITARY even if it is a Russia citizen. This means there is no reason for escalation and no impact.>*

## **7. Turn: Cyberattacks do not escalate. They actually deescalate conflict and stabilize power conflicts.**

### **Jensen and Valeriano 2019**

(“What Do We Know About Cyber Escalation? Observations From Simulations and Surveys,” Benjamin Jensen, Associate Professor of International Relations, Marine Corps University, and Brandon, Bren Chair of Military Innovation at the Marine Corps University, Cyber Security Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council, November 2019, [https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/What\\_do\\_we\\_know\\_about\\_cyber\\_escalation\\_.pdf](https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/What_do_we_know_about_cyber_escalation_.pdf) )

Unlike the Cold War in the twentieth century, **this competition involves a new domain: cyberspace.** From the United States to Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea, **states are using cyber operations to exert influence and control.** Whether massive military and commercial espionage campaigns<sup>5</sup> or international extortion rings and theft,<sup>6</sup> **the cyber domain offers an outlet for states to advance their interests. Does the resulting cyber competition create new escalation risks?** Do cyber operations alter how states respond to international crises in a way that creates incentives for decision makers to cross the Rubicon and use military force to settle disputes? This question is central to current cyber strategy debates and the idea of persistent engagement and defending forward in cyberspace.<sup>7</sup> **The answer is surprising: no. To date, cyber operations have tended to offer great powers escalatory offramps. They have provided signaling mechanisms that have let states shape an adversary’s behavior without engaging military forces and risking military escalation.**<sup>8</sup> Despite the uncertainty surrounding how states use new technologies for strategic ends, **cyber operations tend to be stabilizing and provide options for avoiding costly, protracted conflicts.** This issue brief draws on new academic research, simulations, and survey experiments to study how cyber operations alter crisis decision-making during great power competition. Specifically, it analyzes escalation pathways and how the informed public and foreign policy actors conceptualize disruptive technologies and integrate them into larger competitive strategies. Based on the evidence, cyber operations offer a valuable escalatory offramp. **Even states with more escalatory attitudes tend not to respond militarily to disputes when they have the option of imposing costs and signaling through cyberspace.** How states use cyber operations and the resulting escalation risk is a crucial area of policy-relevant research. Outside of Iran, the majority of cyber operations have been initiated by nuclear-armed states.<sup>9</sup> Despite popular images of lone hackers in basements, cyber operations require an investment in networks, infrastructure, and human capital or sufficient sums of money to buy capability on the black market.<sup>10</sup> **These operations are complex instruments of statecraft that foreign policy actors integrate with other diplomatic, information, military, and economic instruments of power.**<sup>11</sup> A combination of these instruments sends a clear signal to rival states. **Cyber operations may, therefore, help stabilize great power competition in the twenty-first century.**

## 8. US/Russia war will not escalate into nuclear war. 2 reasons: Russia's military capabilities and lack of powerful allies.

### Simhony 2022

("NATO Intervention in Ukraine Won't Spark World War III," Limor Simhony, a policy advisor and researcher based in London. She was previously the director of counterextremism at the political consultancy firm TRD Policy and a research fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies. She holds a doctorate from the Department of War Studies at King's College London. April 1, 2022, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/04/01/nato-intervention-in-ukraine-wont-spark-world-war-iii/>, VY)

However, Russia's indiscriminate attacks against Ukrainian civilians—including bombing hospitals and schools as well as the use of horrific weapons, such as cluster bombs and white phosphorus—should drive the West to reevaluate its war engagement policy and take a more active role by implementing a no-fly zone or securing evacuation corridors—perhaps even actively fighting Russian

forces. **The main concern is any such escalation could lead to World War III. There are two reasons that this is unlikely. The first is that Russia's military capabilities are poor relative to those of Western armies. Their forces are not sufficiently trained; their equipment and weapons are dated and inferior; they experience major logistical, operational, and tactical difficulties; and their soldiers have low morale. Damaging economic sanctions also mean that Russia may not be able to fund a wider war. The expectation that Moscow will be able to escalate the war** into other theaters in an effective way, especially by conventional means, **is unrealistic.** It is possible that if the Russian military continues to struggle, Russian President Vladimir Putin will deploy chemical or even nuclear weapons to increase gains and deter the West from interfering—but that is unlikely. **The second is that Russia has become isolated. To fight a world war, Russia needs powerful allies, which it does not have.** Its strongest ally, China, has largely remained on the sidelines since the war started. It abstained from voting against the U.N. resolution demanding that Russia ends its offensive, and it is worried about secondary sanctions if it aids Russia. The only countries besides Russia that voted to reject the resolution were Belarus, North Korea, Eritrea, and Syria—hardly a winning alliance. **Both world wars saw blocks of powerful allies fight one another. Currently, such a bloc does not exist on Russia's side. These factors mean that there is not a high risk of substantial escalation into total global war.** This should be enough to convince Western nations to change their engagement policy and help Ukraine win

the war by repulsing an opponent that is considerably inferior militarily to their own forces. It is unlikely to happen for two main reasons: fear of Russian nukes and the West's aversion to casualties.

## 1NC Civic-Engagement Advantage Answers

**1. Even if voter turnout was relatively high in 2020, voter turnout was still low and there was a backlash against people of color following the 2020 election. The affirmative cannot solve these voter suppression problems.**

**Ahmed 2021**

("How the Biden Administration Can Tackle America's Voter Turnout Problem," Hauwa Ahmed, research associate for Democracy and Government at the Center for American Progress, Mar. 16, 2021, <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/biden-administration-can-tackle-americas-voter-turnout-problem/>, VY)

**Voter suppression is another widespread barrier to participation nationwide. For example, in Georgia last year, some voters waited in line for 11 hours to cast their ballots; and voters belonging to historically underrepresented groups were disproportionately affected.**<sup>21</sup> In fact, among Georgia voters waiting in line after 7 p.m. on Election Day, the average wait time at polling places was about 51 minutes in jurisdictions that were at least 90 percent nonwhite,<sup>22</sup> compared with only six minutes in jurisdictions that were at least 90 percent white.<sup>23</sup> **These increased wait times in predominantly Black communities can be attributed to the fact that polling places in Georgia have been cut statewide since the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in Shelby County v. Holder.**<sup>24</sup> Additionally, polling places were either eliminated or consolidated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic,<sup>25</sup> and **since the 2020 general election, Republican lawmakers across the country have introduced legislation that would make voting less accessible.**<sup>26</sup> According to a report by Generation Progress, since 2010, **at least 25 states have enacted laws that make voting less accessible,**<sup>27</sup> with measures ranging from restrictive voter ID laws to mandatory voter registration purges.<sup>28</sup> Confusion over voting requirements and processes also lowers turnout rates,<sup>29</sup> and **voters may experience additional logistical challenges such as lack of transportation to polling places. In 2016, lower-income Americans were more likely to cite barriers such as illness, disability, or a lack of access to adequate transportation as reasons they did not vote.**<sup>30</sup> Meanwhile, young voters<sup>31</sup>—**particularly young voters of color and those with lower educational attainment—face these obstacles at disproportionately high rates.**<sup>32</sup> Numerous socioeconomic factors prevent people from voting as well. **Low-income Americans may not be able to obtain flexible paid time off work or affordable caregiving services while visiting polling places—and may face additional challenges locating government offices where they can obtain voter registration and voting materials.** People with disabilities are disproportionately affected by socioeconomic barriers in the voting process. While there have recently been increases in turnout rates for people living with disabilities, **years of inadequate outreach by political campaigns and challenges navigating inaccessible polling places have kept turnout within the disability community historically low.**<sup>33</sup>

**2. The high turnout in 2020 was actually a sign of democratic breakdown and increasing polarization. Even if high turnout can be good for democracy, the current reasons driving turnout are bad for American democracy and a higher turnout alone will not solve democracy.**

### **Drutman 2021**

("The high turnout in 2020 wasn't good for American democracy," Lee Drutman, a senior fellow in the Political Reform program at the think tank New America, February 10, 2021, <https://snfagora.jhu.edu/publication/high-turnout-in-2020/>, VY)

High turnout and toxic politics can go together **High turnout might be a hallmark of a responsive democracy with an engaged and knowledgeable citizenry. However, while the all-or-nothing high-stakes hyper-partisanship of 2020 might be good for high turnout, it is not good for American democracy.** Closely contested winner-take-all elections make losers extremely dissatisfied and thus exacerbate polarization. **This is especially dangerous when party allegiances divide along urban-vs-rural lines, as is currently true. This binary divide generates a kind of "pernicious polarization" in which winning becomes everything, and, partisans will look past, or even actively support, democratic transgressions and power grabs in order for their side to win.** Sometimes, tight elections are how democracies die. **Such extreme polarization is probably one of the factors that explain the Capitol invasion. Politics was highly partisan in the late 19th century, the last time the United States had a similar period of high participation.** Back then, like now, there was high inequality, democratic backsliding and deep distrust of institutions. However, late 19th-century partisan fights centered more on patronage jobs than substantive national policy disagreements. As reforms curbed patronage and the secret ballot made it harder for parties to put pressure on voters, participation (and partisanship) declined. **It may be that the same underlying forces that generate high turnout — high polarization and closely contested high-stakes national elections — also weaken democracy.** Another interpretation is that many Americans prefer to leave politics to the politicians, but reluctantly take part when politics degrades. That sounds more optimistic than it is — the "Stealth Democracy" thesis suggests that the more marginal participants who enter into politics are most likely to hold unrealistic expectations for the ability of politicians to solve problems without disagreement. That makes them more open to authoritarian demagoguery. Both explanations are probably relevant. High turnout can go together with satisfied voters—but only under different rules Does this mean that high participation is always a danger sign for democracy? Not necessarily. **What looks like a record-high turnout election in the United States still puts America in the lower-middle range of advanced democracies.** This country has long been a laggard on voter turnout. One reason for America's exceptionally poor performance is that democracies that use single-member districts, like the United States, Britain and Canada, simply wind up with lots of uncontested legislative elections, which lower voter turnout. In more proportional democracies, votes count equally regardless of district, which increases voter turnout. Proportional democracies also typically have more political parties. This increases the likelihood voters will find a party they feel enthusiastic about. It also means more parties and candidates to reach out to different voters. In such democracies, high turnout is the norm. And it doesn't require high-stakes partisan hatred. As recent comparative studies of affective polarization show, proportional democracies have lower levels of out-party hatred. In summary, the 2020 election should change how we think about voter turnout. First, it tells us that motivating voters with competitive elections is far more effective than just making it easier to vote, confirming what scholars have long known — the most productive way to increase turnout is to make elections more competitive. **Second, it reminds us that increasing voter turnout does not guarantee a higher-quality democracy. Widespread participation may be an important goal, but the reasons for it matter, too. Third, it reveals that increased voter turnout does not benefit Democrats as clearly as both Republicans and Democrats had long assumed. It's at least possible that this will cause partisans on both sides to rethink their assumptions about how to win elections and open up new options for improving the quality of our democracy.**

***<3. Before the 2020 election, a reason for distrust might have been Russian influence in the 2016 election, but since then, domestic actors have proven to be more of a threat. This means the affirmative cannot solve the root cause of election distrust in the status quo.>***

**<4. Their Vij evidence lists reasons why minorities are facing voter suppression: state legislation, lack of polling places, unfair access. Not only does the evidence not list a lack of trust as a reason, it also lists multiple alternative causes the aff does not solve. This means the aff cannot access their impacts.>**

## **5. Turn: Democracy empowers majorities against minorities.**

### **Brennan 2016**

(Jason Brennan Ph.D., Robert J. and Elizabeth Flanagan Family Chair and Provost's Distinguished Associate Professor of Strategy, Economics, Ethics, and Public Policy at the McDonough School of Business at Georgetown University, "In democracy, minorities are ignored and the voters are ignorant." December 2, 2016, <https://www.learnliberty.org/blog/in-democracy-minorities-are-ignored-and-the-voters-are-ignorant/>, VY)

**Democracies ignore minorities' preferences. In a democracy, certain ideological minorities have no hope of winning, and are likely to have their preferences ignored.** (Thomas Christiano refers to this as the "problem of persistent minorities.") **Further, certain ethnic or other demographic minorities have little power on their own; they can get their way or have their interests served only if they build a large coalition, or if the majority is sympathetic to them. Democracy is not inherently fair. It empowers majorities against minorities, and certain minorities tend to stay minorities year after year.** If we really wanted to create a system in which no voice can be ignored, we'd use sortition. As David Estlund has pointed out, **a concern for fairness by itself gives us no particular reason to advocate democracy.** If we want to be fair, we could instead use some sort of lottery or random decision-making method.

## **6. Democratic peace theory is a correlation, not a causation. Being a democracy does not create peace, it's just a common attribute of a peaceful system.**

### **Cranmer et al. 2015**

(Skyler J. Cranmer, Department of Political Science, The Ohio State University; Elizabeth J. Menninga, Department of Political Science, University of Iowa; and Peter J. Mucha, Department of Mathematics, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; "Kantian fractionalization predicts the conflict propensity of the international system," PNAS September 22, 2015 112 (38) 11812-11816; <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1509423112>, VY)

Lastly, we examine the relative contribution of the three network layers to Kantian fractionalization. This is useful because theory does not stipulate whether all three are equally important in their contributions to the Kantian peace. In the political science literature, joint democracy enjoys a place of prominence, so much so that the Kantian **peace is often reduced to only the democratic peace.** This democratic peace has been lauded as the nearest thing to a law of international politics (7), has permeated into the media, and has been cited by multiple Presidents of the United States when discussing foreign policy. We quantify the contribution from each network layer through a series of tests permuting country identities, calculating the difference between Kantian fractionalization from each layer relative to the mean over permutations. Fig. 3 shows that **the large majority of the measure is driven by trade and IGO connections, whereas joint democracy plays little role at all.** (As shown in the SI Appendix, **our results do not change meaningfully if we drop joint democracy; indeed, the predictive models actually perform better.**) **Our results suggest, at minimum, that the idea of a democratic peace, although generally thought credible at the dyadic level, does not scale up to become a meaningful predictor of system stability. This is problematic for the claim of a democratic peace because states, their relationships, and broader systemic characteristics are all attributes of the same system; a coherent explanation for conflict requires empirical agreement regardless of the resolution with which we measure the process of interest.**

## 1NC Journalism Turn

### **1. Government policies aimed at limiting disinformation have a “chilling” or silencing impact on free speech and journalism.**

#### **Nielsen and Common 2021**

(“How to respond to disinformation while protecting free speech,” Rasmus Kleis Nielsen is Director of the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism and Professor of Political Communication at the University of Oxford. He has a PhD in Communications from Columbia University. MacKenzie Common is a Research Fellow at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford. She has a PhD in Law from the London School of Economics (LSE). 19 February 2021, <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/news/how-respond-disinformation-while-protecting-free-speech>, VY, \*2 page card\*)

**They risk creating a situation where measures meant, at least nominally, to address very specific problems of narrowly defined types of disinformation, for political reasons or in response to much wider public concern, end up restricting much broader terrains of information that may be problematic, but are often neither demonstrably harmful nor demonstrably false. Furthermore, they would expand attempts to counter disinformation to forms of speech that would normally often be protected under the human right to impart information and ideas,** which, as the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Representative on Freedom of the Media, the Organization of American States (OAS) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information pointed out in their 2017 joint statement, **“is not limited to “correct” statements, that the right also protects information and ideas that may shock, offend and disturb”.**<sup>11</sup> Why free expression may be at risk **Platform companies have their own content moderation policies. In many cases, these have historically been very permissive on political issues, in line with the First Amendment tradition of the US,** where many of these companies were founded and are headquartered, even as they have been more restrictive on some specific issues (such as nudity) in ways that reflect a mix of commercial and cultural considerations. **How these policies are implemented in practice varies, and, like other aspects of how platforms operate, sometimes seem to disadvantage already historically marginalised and disadvantaged communities.**<sup>12</sup> **At least on paper, the policies are generally meant to apply equally to all users everywhere. It is important to note that, while these content moderation policies are often significantly more restrictive than US laws regulating free speech,** they can be more permissive than local laws across the world that are often more restrictive than those found in the US. Platform companies’ content moderation policies and their practical enforcement has already led to a number of instances where important forms of free speech and the work of journalists and independent news media have been restricted in problematic ways – ranging from YouTube removing content documenting the civil war in Syria to Facebook removing articles accompanied by the iconic photo of Phan Thị Kim Phúc running naked after being severely burned on her back by a South Vietnamese napalm attack.<sup>13</sup> Especially since 2016, and even more so in the course of the coronavirus pandemic, many platform companies’ content moderation policies have been revised and expanded in part to cover a wider range of problematic information, including various kinds of disinformation, misinformation, and malinformation. Companies have expanded their policies and in some cases in enforcement to various degrees even as disinformation problems have also continued to evolve. While in some ways welcome, **these expansions also come with the risk of restricting legitimate speech, as they are often enforced inconsistently, with little transparency, and no independent oversight or due process.** There are also real risks associated with the enforcement of these policies, whether through artificial intelligence systems, human content moderation or, more commonly, some combination. While automation can be used to scale up content moderation to deal with things at great scale and great pace, **the very real limitations of necessarily imperfect technologies combined with the inherently political nature of decisions over what constitutes disinformation means there are serious practical and principled limitations to how useful artificial intelligence will be in dealing with disinformation.** The role of governments increasingly, however, governments take an active and direct role in content moderation online, issues that were in practice left more or less to private companies in much of the world. There are clearly many instances in which governments taking a more active role, on the basis of clear and precise legislation, and in ensuring independent oversight, transparency, and due process, is entirely appropriate. **But there is also a risk that some governments will pursue responses to disinformation that – irrespective of whether they in fact help address specific problems of narrowly defined types**

**of disinformation – risk restricting free speech.** 14 Governments may, for example, pass laws that define disinformation as including, among other things, content that is critical of the government or counters government messaging. A controversial law in Pakistan provides no definition of fake news and states that content should be labelled as false if the Pakistani regulatory authority says it is false. 15 Similarly, Vietnam’s Law on Cybersecurity has a broad prohibition on disinformation (although it is only labelled as “conduct which is strictly prohibited”) which includes “distorting history, denying revolutionary achievements, destroying the national solidarity block” and “providing false information, causing confusion amongst the citizens,” and “cheating or tricking, manipulating, training or drilling people to oppose the State of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.” 16 **Disinformation laws that are too broad and vague or pose a risk to human rights can, therefore, like similarly broad and vague laws already on the books, risk chilling legitimate speech and can be used selectively or indiscriminately by governments to encourage or require private companies to police speech in ways that can harm free expression and limit public debate.**

## **2. Protecting freedom of press is an important part of democracy. Turns their impact.**

### **Menchu 2022**

(“Democracy Backslides When A Free Press is Considered an Enemy of the People,” Sofia Menchu, a Guatemalan journalist and reporter for Reuters. She is a member of the Central America Prosperity Project (CAPP) at the George W. Bush Institute, March 22, 2022, <https://www.bushcenter.org/publications/articles/2022/03/democracy-talks-menchu-democracy-backslides-when-free-press-considered-enemy.html>, VY)

How do you define freedom of expression? Every person has the right to freedom of thought and expression. This right is about the freedom to search for and receive information and ideas without any restriction. **For journalists, this means having the ability to investigate and publish about every topic. It means having the freedom to publish and discover information about the government, politicians, businessmen, or anything or anyone else without it being a risk. Guaranteeing and respecting this freedom of speech is an important part of democracy.** What does freedom of expression mean to you personally and to your work? **It’s very important that I have the freedom to publish and to discover information about any topic. The people have a right to the real information about different topics. The government should guarantee this right. It’s very important in journalism.**

## 1NC Social Media Disinformation

**1. Alt causes to their social media impacts: Cognitive biases and algorithms lead to extremism and are inevitable. Even if they stopped every single Russia interference, they would not solve their impact.**

### **Menczer and Hills 2020**

("Information Overload Helps Fake News Spread, and Social Media Knows It," Filippo Menczer, Luddy Distinguished Professor of Informatics and Computer Science at Indiana University, and Thomas Hills is a professor of psychology and director of the Behavioral and Data Science master's program at the University of Warwick in England, December 1, 2020, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/information-overload-helps-fake-news-spread-and-social-media-knows-it/>, VY)

**This winner-take-all popularity pattern of memes, in which most are barely noticed while a few spread widely**, could not be explained by some of them being more catchy or somehow more valuable: the memes in this simulated world had no intrinsic quality. **Virality resulted purely from the statistical consequences of information proliferation in a social network of agents with limited attention**. Even when agents preferentially shared memes of higher quality, researcher Xiaoyan Qiu, then at OSoMe, observed little improvement in the overall quality of those shared the most. Our models revealed that **even when we want to see and share high-quality information, our inability to view everything in our news feeds inevitably leads us to share things that are partly or completely untrue. Cognitive biases greatly worsen the problem**. In a set of groundbreaking studies in 1932, psychologist Frederic Bartlett told volunteers a Native American legend about a young man who hears war cries and, pursuing them, enters a dreamlike battle that eventually leads to his real death. Bartlett asked the volunteers, who were non-Native, to recall the rather confusing story at increasing intervals, from minutes to years later. He found that as time passed, the rememberers tended to distort the tale's culturally unfamiliar parts such that they were either lost to memory or transformed into more familiar things. We now know that our minds do this all the time: **they adjust our understanding of new information so that it fits in with what we already know. One consequence of this so-called confirmation bias is that people often seek out, recall and understand information that best confirms what they already believe. This tendency is extremely difficult to correct**. Experiments consistently show that even when **people** encounter balanced information containing views from differing perspectives, they **tend to find supporting evidence for what they already believe**. And when people with divergent beliefs about emotionally charged issues such as climate change are shown the same information on these topics, they become even more committed to their original positions. **Making matters worse, search engines and social media platforms provide personalized recommendations based on the vast amounts of data they have about users' past preferences. They prioritize information in our feeds that we are most likely to agree with—no matter how fringe—and shield us from information that might change our minds. This makes us easy targets for polarization**. Nir Grinberg and his co-workers at Northeastern University recently showed that conservatives in the U.S. are more receptive to misinformation. But our own analysis of consumption of low-quality information on Twitter shows that the vulnerability applies to both sides of the political spectrum, and no one can fully avoid it. Even our ability to detect online manipulation is affected by our political bias, though not symmetrically: Republican users are more likely to mistake bots promoting conservative ideas for humans, whereas Democrats are more likely to mistake conservative human users for bots.

**2. Russia is focused on planting propaganda about the Ukraine invasion, NOT meddling with U.S. politics. Their evidence is too old and doesn't reflect current priorities.**

**Dale 2022**

("Fact check: Pro-Russia social media accounts spread false claims that old videos show Ukrainian 'crisis actors'," Daniel Dale, reporter in CNN's Washington Bureau, where he fact-checks political claims, March 10, 2022, <https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/10/politics/fact-check-ukraine-not-actually-crisis-actor-fakes/index.html>, VY)

Washington (CNN) **Pro-Russia accounts on social media are trying to convince the public not to believe accurate news reports about Ukrainians suffering and dying. To sow doubt, the pro-Russia accounts, joined by accounts that are critical of the "mainstream media," are spreading false claims that media outlets have been broadcasting phony footage of Ukrainian "crisis actors":** happy, healthy people who are merely playing the role of terrified or deceased war victims for the cameras. Videos that are being falsely described as depicting Ukrainian "crisis actors" have been viewed millions of times on various social media platforms over the past two weeks. **Thousands of people appear to have shared these videos because they had been duped, not because they were maliciously trying to spread incorrect information.** Their confusion is unfortunate but understandable. False claims about "crisis actors" rely on a two-step process that can be bewildering to people who aren't experts on conspiratorial thinking. Here's how the deception works. First, the people behind the deception find videos that were indeed staged -- but staged for benign purposes unrelated to the war in Ukraine. One example is footage of actors pretending to be terrified during a 2013 film shoot for a British science fiction movie. Second, **social media accounts falsely claim or suggest that the acting was done by people pretending to be Ukrainian war victims, even though the footage actually has nothing to do with the war, and falsely claim or suggest that the mainstream media promoted this footage as if it was from the war, even though media outlets didn't actually do so.**

***<3. Their evidence is talking about Russia state-run media, not social media posts. Their evidence also is only about the Ukraine propaganda, not interfering with US politics.>***

**4. Social media companies rarely fact check or regulate news on their platforms. This is the largest cause for increasing fake news. The affirmative cannot solve fake news on social media.**

#### **Stewart 2020**

(“America’s growing fake news problem, in one chart.” Emily Stewart, 2020, December 22, Vox. Retrieved June 17, 2022, from <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/12/22/22195488/fake-news-social-media-2020>, NAUDL)

America’s fake news problem is getting worse, not better. According to an analysis released by NewsGuard and first reported by Axios’s Sara Fischer on Tuesday, **websites that provide “unreliable news” increased their share of social media interactions this year. In 2019, 8 percent of engagement with the 100 top-performing news sources on social media was dubious. In 2020, that number more than doubled to 17 percent.** NewsGuard, which rates news websites according to reliability, found that people are engaging in a lot more news this year than they were last year. Engagement with the top 100 US news sources (meaning likes, shares, and comments on Facebook and Twitter) went from 8.6 billion reactions to 16.3 billion reactions between 2019 and 2020. That makes sense given, well, everything that has happened in 2020. **There has been a lot of news, and due to pandemic-related factors such as unemployment and lockdowns, people have a lot of time on their hands to read stuff online. But an increasing amount of the news people are seeing is problematic, inaccurate, or suspicious.** And that’s something to worry about. The analysis found that the Daily Wire, the outlet founded by right-wing commentator Ben Shapiro, saw 2.5 times more interactions this year than last. The blossoming of false and unreliable news on the internet is a cultural, political, and technological phenomenon that’s hard to get your head around, let alone tackle. **Conspiracy theories, misinformation, and disinformation run rampant on the internet, and it’s often difficult for people to tell what is true and what’s not. Social media companies are not exactly doing a bang-up job of addressing the problem,** either. Right-wing content, in particular, thrives on platforms such as Facebook. But just because someone sees certain content doesn’t necessarily mean they are particularly influenced by it, and figuring out just how powerful certain messages are can be complicated. Over the summer, Kevin Roose at the New York Times reported on what he described as a “parallel media universe” of super-conservative content on Facebook, noting that right-leaning pages and posts on the platform consistently get more interactions and shares than more liberal and mainstream ones. (Though just because someone likes a news post doesn’t mean they actually read it.)

***<5. Their evidence concedes that the real problem is faked documents and stories, not cyberattacks. This means the affirmative doesn’t solve the problem.>***

## 6. Social media misinformation comes from all platforms, independent of cyber attacks

### Burns 2022

“Journalists give thumbs down to social media,” Greg Burns, Editorial Board member, columnist and business editor at the Chicago Tribune and as a reporter for BusinessWeek magazine and the Chicago Sun-Times, February 9, 2022, Local News Initiative. Retrieved June 19, 2022, from <https://localnewsinitiative.northwestern.edu/posts/2022/02/09/medill-social-media-survey/>, NAUDL)

Journalists say social-media platforms have hurt their industry, contributing to inaccurate and one-sided news accounts by exerting too much control over the mix of news that people see, according to a recent survey. More than nine of every 10 survey respondents said **social-media companies deliver a “worse mix of news” to their users**, according to the online survey of journalists by Northwestern University’s Medill school of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications. The survey also found that nearly eight of 10 said harassment of journalists on social media is a “very big” or “moderately big” problem. The second-ever Medill Media Industry Survey was conducted at the end of 2021 by Associate Professor Stephanie Edgerly of Medill, and Danielle K. Brown, the Cowles Professor of Journalism, Diversity and Equality at the University of Minnesota. More than 1,500 members of the U.S. news media completed the questionnaire. Medill used Cision, a media listings database, to obtain email contact information from individuals who had at least one of the following keywords in their profile: columnist, correspondent, director, editor, producer, reporter, writer, then sorted the list for news organizations exceeding a minimal audience size. Exactly 25,000 people were invited to participate in the survey, which was open between Nov. 30 and Dec. 31. Among the findings, **90.7 percent of respondents said the role social media companies play in delivering the news results is a worse mix of news, while 86.5 percent said social media companies have too much control over the mix of news people see. Some 79.3 percent said social media has a mostly negative impact on the journalism industry, and an overwhelming 94.3 percent of respondents blamed social media for spreading inaccurate news.** The survey was the subject of a discussion at a Medill Centennial panel on Feb. 3, featuring newsroom leaders of ABC News, The Wall Street Journal, Vox Media and the Los Angeles Times. “There’s certainly a lot of frustration,” observed Kevin Merida, Executive Editor at the Times. But Merida also said social-media platforms are an important gateway to the work of journalists, who must learn to operate on them. “We’re not putting the genie back in the bottle,” he said. “Within the platforms, we have the ability to also hop in and define our relationship, how we’re going to access them and how we’re going to communicate through them.” ABC News President Kimberly Godwin said **journalists need to help people become smarter consumers of news on social platforms. “They keep sending you misinformation,” she said. “We have to find ways to break through the clutter so that they get at the truth.”**

***<7. They jump to their impact of fascism. This is incorrect for a few reasons:***

***1. It blames the Trump presidency. If this were true, the new Biden Administration would solve.***

***2. There is no connection between fascism and social media. Even if there were, it is caused by extremist echo chambers, which the aff doesn't solve.***

***3. Increasing cybersecurity does not increase media literacy or prevent actors from making fake social media posts.>***

## 1NC Solvency Answers

### **1. NATO is weak now and lacks consensus on cybersecurity policy. This consensus model means there is a delay in execution of the affirmative.**

#### **Alemaný et al. on March 9, 2022**

(Alemany, J., Meyer, T., & Raji, T. (2022, March 9). Analysis | lawmakers wonder whether NATO is ready to robustly defend against a cyberattack against one of its own. The Washington Post. Retrieved June 16, 2022, from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/03/08/lawmakers-wonder-whether-nato-is-ready-robustly-defend-cyber-attack-against-one-if-its-own/>, NAUDL)

Article 5 James Andrew Lewis, the director of the strategic technologies program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said NATO has “actually done a pretty good job of figuring out what their response would be to a significant cyber attack,” Lewis said, adding that “there would have to be some equivalence with a physical attack” in order to trigger Article 5. “But **NATO might not have the political consensus,**” Lewis added, referring to the need for the consent of all 28 members in order for any invocation of the collective defense clause. At least one NATO member, for example, “has taken a broad view suggesting a cyber operation would be an armed attack 'if it caused substantial loss of life or considerable physical or economic damage,'" Michael Schmitt, a distinguished scholar at West Point, wrote in Just Security last month. But: “**The prevailing view is that ... an armed attack is the ‘most grave form’ of a use of force. Thus, the scale and effects of any Russian cyber operations would have to be especially severe before triggering the right of individual or collective self-defense,**” Schmitt writes. Ivo Daalder, U.S. ambassador to NATO from 2009 to 2013, added that updates to Article 5 are irrelevant if the overall system “**to act collectively in defense of NATO territory has eroded:**” “Although NATO has done what it needs to do in order to maintain some significant capability of defense, the system as a whole really hasn't lived with the prospect of a military or cyber attack on its territory in a credible way,” Daalder said. Ukraine was admitted to NATO's Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (CCDCOE) last week, Cyberscoop's Suzanne Smalley reports of the NATO-accredited military research institution. NATO Sec. Gen. Jens Stoltenberg said in January that CCDCOE's cyber experts “had been exchanging information with their Ukrainian counterparts 'on the current malicious cyber activities' that Ukraine was experiencing in the lead-up to Russia's invasion,” per Smalley. **But another potential setback for NATO is that it has not taken steps to acquire offensive cyber capabilities and is dependent on member states that boast them.** “We need to add into our plans the way we fight offensive cyber capability because you better believe Russia is going to use it on us ... But **what NATO is good at is being a defensive alliance, and sometimes they're slow to pick up on we have to also be capable of offensive action,**” retired former NATO supreme commander and retired U.S. Air Force Gen. Philip Breedlove told The Early.

***<2. Increasing cyber security fails. As defenses increase, the hackers just get more sophisticated. This means the affirmative will always fail to stop cyberattacks.>***

## 2NC/1NR Russia Advantage Answers Extensions

The status quo solves hacks. The Department of Justice has elevated hacks to a high priority and is fighting hacks.

### **Bing 2021**

("Exclusive: U.S. to give ransomware hacks similar priority as terrorism," Christopher Bing, June 3, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/technology/exclusive-us-give-ransomware-hacks-similar-priority-terrorism-official-says-2021-06-03/>)

WASHINGTON, June 3 (Reuters) - **The U.S. Department of Justice is elevating investigations of ransomware attacks to a similar priority as terrorism in the wake of the Colonial Pipeline hack and mounting damage caused by cyber criminals,** a senior department official told Reuters. Internal guidance sent on Thursday to U.S. attorney's offices across the country said **information about ransomware investigations in the field should be centrally coordinated with a recently created task force in Washington. "It's a specialized process to ensure we track all ransomware cases regardless of where it may be referred in this country, so you can make the connections between actors and work your way up to disrupt the whole chain,"** said John Carlin, principle associate deputy attorney general at the Justice Department. Last month, a cyber criminal group that the U.S. authorities said operates from Russia, penetrated the pipeline operator on the U.S. East Coast, locking its systems and demanding a ransom. The hack caused a shutdown lasting several days, led to a spike in gas prices, panic buying and localized fuel shortages in the southeast. Colonial Pipeline decided to pay the hackers who invaded their systems nearly \$5 million to regain access, the company said. **The DOJ guidance specifically refers to Colonial as an example of the "growing threat that ransomware and digital extortion pose to the nation." "To ensure we can make necessary connections across national and global cases and investigations, and to allow us to develop a comprehensive picture of the national and economic security threats we face, we must enhance and centralize our internal tracking,"** said the guidance seen by Reuters and previously unreported. The Justice Department's decision to push ransomware into this special process illustrates how the issue is being prioritized, U.S. officials said. "We've used this model around terrorism before but never with ransomware," said Carlin. The process has typically been reserved for a short list of topics, including national security cases, legal experts said. In practice, it means that investigators in U.S. attorney's offices handling ransomware attacks will be expected to share both updated case details and active technical information with leaders in Washington. The guidance also asks the offices to look at and include other investigations focused on the larger cybercrime ecosystem. According to the guidance, the list of investigations that now require central notification include cases involving: counter anti-virus services, illicit online forums or marketplaces, cryptocurrency exchanges, bulletproof hosting services, botnets and online money laundering services. Bulletproof hosting services refer to opaque internet infrastructure registration services which help cyber criminals to anonymously conduct intrusions. A botnet is a group of compromised internet-connected devices that can be manipulated to cause digital havoc. Hackers build, buy and rent out botnets in order to conduct cyber crimes ranging from advertising fraud to large cyberattacks. **"We really want to make sure prosecutors and criminal investigators report and are tracking ... cryptocurrency exchanges, illicit online forums or marketplaces where people are selling hacking tools, network access credentials - going after the botnets that serve multiple purposes."** said Carlin. Mark Califano, a former U.S. attorney and cybercrime expert, said **the "heightened reporting could allow DOJ to more effectively deploy resources" and to "identify common exploits" used by cybercriminals.**

## **The risk of cyber escalation is exaggerated. Cyberattacks are a poor tool of escalation.**

### **Borghard and Longeran 2019**

(“Cyber Operations as Imperfect Tools of Escalation”, Erica D. Borghard, Ph.D Assistant Professor in the Army Cyber Institute at the United States Military Academy, and Shawn W. Longeran, Senior Advisor to the U.S. Cyberspace Solarium Commission at U.S. Cyber Command, Strategic Studies Quarterly, Fall 2019,

[https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-13\\_Issue-3/Borghard.pdf](https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-13_Issue-3/Borghard.pdf))

However, **there are important empirical reasons to suspect that the risks of cyber escalation may be exaggerated. Specifically, if cyberspace is in fact an environment that** (perhaps even more so than others) **generates severe escalation risks, why has cyber escalation not yet occurred? Most interactions between cyber rivals have been characterized by limited volleys that have not escalated beyond nuisance levels and have been largely contained below the use-of-force threshold.**<sup>5</sup> For example, in a survey of cyber incidents and responses between 2000 and 2014, Brandon Valeriano et al. find that **“rivals tend to respond only to lower-level [cyber] incidents and the response tends to check the intrusion as opposed to seek escalation dominance. The majority of cyber escalation episodes are at a low severity threshold and are non-escalatory.** These incidents are usually ‘tit-for-tat’ type responses within one step of the original incident.”<sup>6</sup> Even in the two rare examples in which states employed kinetic force in response to adversary cyber operations—the US counter-ISIL drone campaign in 2015 and Israel’s airstrike against Hamas cyber operatives in 2019—the use of force was circumscribed and did not escalate the overall conflict (not to mention that force was used against nonstate adversaries with limited potential to meaningfully escalate in response to US or Israeli force).<sup>7</sup> We posit that **cyber escalation has not occurred because cyber operations are poor tools of escalation.** In particular, we argue that this stems from key characteristics of offensive cyber capabilities that limit escalation through four mechanisms. First, retaliatory offensive cyber operations may not exist at the desired time of employment. Second, **even under conditions where they may exist, their effects are uncertain and often relatively limited.** Third, **several attributes of offensive cyber operations generate important tradeoffs for decision-makers that may make them hesitant to employ capabilities in some circumstances.** Finally, **the alternative of cross-domain escalation**—responding to a cyber incident with noncyber, kinetic instruments—**is unlikely to be chosen except under rare circumstances, given the limited cost-generation potential of offensive cyber operations.** In this article, we define cyber escalation and then explore the implications of the technical features and requirements for offensive cyber operations. We also consider potential alternative or critical responses to each of these logics. Finally, we evaluate the implications for US policy making.

**Lack of response to cyberattacks means that there is no escalation or military response.**

### **Libicki 2020**

(“Correlations Between Cyberspace Attacks and Kinetic Attacks,” Martin C. Libicki Ph.D., Center for Cyber Security Studies, U.S. Naval Academy, 2020, <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/9131731>)

Overall, **there is little public evidence that hostile events in cyberspace echo strongly outside it. Indeed, rarely do events in cyberspace – much less escalation in cyberspace – lead to serious responses at all. Some research suggests that even severe cyberattacks would generally be less likely than kinetic attacks to induce a response.** Although opening cyberattacks can precede kinetic attacks, there are also cases when war comes as a surprise and cyberattacks are not used until the proper accesses to target systems have been gained. Cyberattacks have the potential to put hitherto sacrosanct targets – notably space systems, and other NC3 elements – in play, but **cyberattacks have reportedly taken place against satellites while kinetic attacks (weapons tests aside) have not, so far. The failure to respond to cyberattacks may have played a role in enabling missile attacks** on Saudi Aramco facilities, but the link is distant (seven years earlier) and tenuous. There is no analog (yet) in the Russo-Ukrainian conflict. **Several reasons could be adduced to explain the lack of correlation.** One is that while there could be cyberattacks **consequential enough to induce echoes in the physical world, none have reached that threshold and it may well be that none could reach that threshold.** Even as the attack surface for cyberspace operations keeps growing, hackers grow more talented, and their leaders more aware of the gains available from such operations – **defense is not sleeping. Those who own networks are taking cybersecurity seriously** (at long last), cloud computing may have helped put defenses in the hands of those for whom protection is a profit center, and the cybersecurity industry itself is robust. Succeeding generations of software – e.g., versions of Windows operation systems – are also more impervious to intrusions. Two is that, in common with many widely-feared phenomena, cyberattacks have evolved from an acute problem (one both rare and fearsome) to a chronic problem (more common, but something that one can adjust to). Three, the oft-expressed belief that cyberwar is war has yet to take hold. **Because cyberspace operations are ambiguous** (and not easily grasped even when clear) and **their effects almost always temporary and not (yet) lethal, they may be considered something separate and apart.** Time will tell whether this distinction will continue to be observed.

## Russia/US war will not happen – Russia just pushing nuclear rhetoric.

### Ellyat on April 29, 2022

(“Could there be war between Russia and the west? strategists predict what could happen next.” Holly Ellyatt, 2022, April 29, CNBC. Retrieved June 19, 2022, from

<https://www.cnbc.com/2022/04/29/russia-ukraine-war-should-the-west-prepare-for-war-with-putin.html>, NAUDL)

### **The saber-rattling and rhetoric between Moscow and the West have become notably more**

**aggressive** this week, prompting concerns that a direct confrontation between the two power blocs could be more likely. In the last few days alone, for example, Russia stopped gas supplies to two European countries and has warned the West several times that the risk of a nuclear war is very “real.” In addition, Russian President Vladimir Putin has said that any foreign intervention in Ukraine would provoke what he called a “lightning fast” response from Moscow, while his Foreign Ministry warned NATO not to test its patience. **For their part, Western officials have dismissed Russia’s “bravado” and “dangerous”**

**nuclear war rhetoric**, with the U.K. calling on Western allies to “double down” on their support for Ukraine. CNBC asked strategists about the likelihood of a direct confrontation between Russia and the West. Here’s what they said. Nuclear attack? At the start of the week, Russia’s foreign minister warned that the threat of a nuclear war “cannot be underestimated” and said NATO’s supply of weapons to Ukraine was tantamount to the military alliance engaging in a proxy war with Russia. Putin doubled down on the bellicose rhetoric Wednesday, threatening a “lightning fast” retaliation against any country intervening in the Ukraine war and creating what he called “strategic threats for Russia.” He then appeared to allude to Russia’s arsenal of intercontinental ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons when he warned that Russia has the “tools” for a retaliatory response “that no one else can boast of having now ... we will use them if necessary.” **But strategists told CNBC that Putin is playing on risk aversion**

**in the West and that the chances of a nuclear war are remote. “I think it’s outside the realm of possibility right now that there’s going to be a nuclear war or World War III that really spills over that far beyond Ukraine’s borders,”** Samuel Ramani, a geopolitical analyst and associate fellow at the Royal

United Services Institute, told CNBC. **“If there’s a border spillover right now, we’re still probably most likely looking at something like Moldova being vulnerable to an invasion,”** he said. A U.S. infantryman at

a combined arms live fire exercise at Al-Ghalail Range in Qatar, on Nov. 14, 2018. **He noted that Russia has a long history of using “nuclear brinkmanship” as a way of preventing the West from pursuing security policies that it doesn’t like, with the escalation in hostile rhetoric aimed at deterring NATO members from making heavy arms deliveries to Ukraine.** Moment of danger Nonetheless, Ramani

noted the threat posed by Russia could become more acute if it felt humiliated on the battlefield. In particular, military setbacks in Ukraine around May 9 could pose some danger. That’s Russia’s “Victory Day” — the anniversary of Nazi Germany’s defeat by the Soviet Union in World War II. “Putin has had a history of escalating unpredictability if he feels that Russia is being humiliated in some way ... and if there are major setbacks, especially on around the 9th [of May] then there’s a risk of unbreakable action,” he said. “But also there’s a logic of mutually assured destruction that hopefully will rein everybody in.”

## 2NC/1NR Civic-Engagement Advantage Answers

**Alt causes to American voter participation and decline of democracy that the affirmative cannot solve. This means they do not access their impact.**

**Weiser et al. 2021**

("How to Fix American Democracy," Wendy R. Weiser, directs the Democracy Program at the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law; Daniel Weiner, serves as director of the Brennan Center's Elections and Government Program, and Tim Lau, January 13, 2021, <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/how-fix-american-democracy>, VY)

**The violent attack in the U.S. Capitol was an attack on American democracy. It was the culmination of efforts by President Trump and his allies to overturn the results of the**

**November election, fueled by repeated lies about widespread voter fraud.** Had they been successful, these efforts would have disenfranchised millions of Americans, especially targeting Black and brown voters. While the insurrection failed to nullify the election, **the United States nonetheless has faced years of mounting attempts to undermine fair and equal representation. Voter suppression efforts have become increasingly brazen, with recent laws in many states that make it unnecessarily hard to vote.** Many Americans have grown disillusioned by a political system that undermines the will of voters through extreme gerrymandering and gives outsized influence to a tiny class of wealthy megadonors. And the last four years have underscored the need for stronger guardrails that prevent abuses of presidential power. All of these dynamics point to the need for the comprehensive set of democracy reforms laid out in the For the People Act (H.R. 1 in the House of Representatives and S. 1 in the Senate), coupled with the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. After the insurrection at the Capitol last week, how would you describe the state of American democracy?

Wendy Weiser: What happened last week was not just an attack on the Capitol; it was an attack on our democracy. **This attack was spawned by repeated lies about voter fraud and thoroughly debunked conspiracy theories about the integrity of our election system that were designed to overturn the results of November's presidential election. They were part of a broader illegitimate scheme to thwart to election, which included attempts to disenfranchise millions of Americans, targeting Black and brown voters.** We need accountability for everyone who stoked and participated in this attack, but we also need stronger guardrails to strengthen our democracy to ensure that this can't happen again in the future. **We just had a grueling election cycle that saw, on the one hand, unprecedented mobilization that led to historic voter turnout and, on the other, unprecedented efforts to thwart the electoral process and to disenfranchise voters of color. It should not take more than 300 lawsuits and massive amounts of organizing around the country just for people to have access to the ballot.** But it did, because there isn't a set of clear rules and procedures that ensure every eligible American has fair voting access. And let's be clear: this didn't start in 2020. Even though President Trump has been driving this lie for more than four years, it did not start with him and it will not end with him. **The effort to restrict access to voting, fueled by lies about voter fraud, has been going on for a decade, and it escalated in 2013 after the Supreme Court gutted the protections of the Voting Rights Act in Shelby County v. Holder.** Self-interested state legislators have increased hurdles to voting and created gerrymandered electoral districts; some have gone so far as to undo the work of their citizens who voted to expand the franchise. In 2018, for example, Floridians voted overwhelmingly to restore voting rights to their fellow citizens with past felony convictions, only to have their state legislature significantly undercut the new law before those citizens could actually vote. **Unfortunately, there has been a growing movement among state legislators and other leaders who use underhanded tactics to keep eligible Americans from voting or to keep their votes from counting.** The push to nullify the results of the 2020 election was the most blatant and shocking example, but **it is part of a larger anti-democratic trend** that we must thoroughly combat and root out. That is why comprehensive democracy reform is really necessary.

## Historically, democracy is bad for minority groups.

### Miller 2018

(James Miller, a professor of politics at the New School for Social Research, "Five myths about democracy," September 7, 2018, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/five-myths/five-myths-about-democracy/2018/09/07/987e2c6e-b14e-11e8-aed9-001309990777\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/five-myths/five-myths-about-democracy/2018/09/07/987e2c6e-b14e-11e8-aed9-001309990777_story.html), VY)

In 2015, President Barack Obama used the phrase "That's not who we are as Americans" to rebut then-candidate Donald Trump's immigration proposals. It was a phrase he deployed routinely to push back on views he saw as exclusionary. His framing was consistent with Americans' popular descriptions of their country as a "nation of immigrants" and a "melting pot." Still, **history is rich with democracies that excluded minority groups or reduced them to second-class citizenship. In Athens, women, foreigners and enslaved people couldn't become citizens. In the United States, of course, slavery was legal until the end of the Civil War; segregation was legal until the middle of the 20th century. The 1798 Alien and Sedition Acts placed discriminatory limits on who could become a citizen;** the Constitution referred to American Indian nations in the same context as foreign countries. To this day, **some advocates of democracy argue that robust forms of self-rule require the exclusion of foreigners.** In Italy, the recently elected deputy prime minister, Matteo Salvini, has said he plans to expel members of the country's Roma minority who don't have Italian citizenship, stereotyping Roma as people who "live in total lawlessness ." Former White House adviser Stephen Bannon has blamed immigration for undermining American living standards, calling it "the beating heart of the problem."

## The democracy peace theory uses flawed logic. Democracies do not operate as the theory states and it only holds true using post-1945 examples.

### Rosato 2003

(Rosato, Sebastian, Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Political Science at The University of Chicago, "The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory." *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 97, no. 4, 2003, pp. 585–602. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/3593025](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3593025), VY)

**The causal logics that underpin democratic peace theory cannot explain why democracies remain at peace with one another because the mechanisms that make up these logics do not operate as stipulated by the theory's proponents.** In the case of the normative logic, liberal democracies do not reliably externalize their domestic norms of conflict resolution and do not treat one another with trust and respect when their interests clash. Similarly, in the case of the institutional logic, **democratic leaders are not especially accountable to peace-loving publics or pacific interest groups, democracies are not particularly slow to mobilize or incapable of surprise attack, and open political competition offers no guarantee that a democracy will reveal private information about its level of resolve.** In view of these findings **there are good reasons to doubt that joint democracy causes peace.** Democratic peace theorists could counter this claim by pointing out that even in the absence of a good explanation for the democratic peace, the fact remains that democracies have rarely fought one another. In addition to casting doubt on existing explanations for the democratic peace, then, a comprehensive critique should also offer a positive account of the finding. One potential explanation is that the democratic peace is in fact an imperial peace based on American power. This claim rests on two observations. First, the democratic peace is essentially a post-World War II phenomenon restricted to the Americas and Western Europe. Second, the United States has been the dominant power in both these regions since World War II and has placed an overriding emphasis on regional peace. **There are three reasons we should expect democratic peace theory's empirical claims to hold only in the post-1945 period.** First, as even proponents of the democratic peace have admitted, **there were few democracies in the international system prior to 1945** and even fewer that were in a position to fight one another. Since 1945, however, both the number of democracies in the international system and the number that have had an opportunity to fight one another have grown markedly (e.g., Russett 1993, 20). Second, while **members of double democratic dyads were not significantly less likely to fight one another than members of other types of dyads** prior to World War II, they have been significantly more peaceful since then (e.g., Farber and Gowa 1997). Third, **the farther back we go in history the harder it is to find a consensus among both scholars and policymakers on what states qualify as democracies.** Depending on whose criteria we use, there may have been no democratic wars prior to 1945, or there may have been several (see, e.g., Layne 1994; Ray 1995; Russett 1993; Spiro 1994). Since then, however, we can be fairly certain that democracies have hardly fought each other at all.

## 2NC/1NR Journalism Turn Extensions

**Policies that attempt to get rid of disinformation harm freedom of expression and journalism. Recent court victories prove.**

### **Media Defence 2021**

("Are fake news laws the best way to tackle disinformation?" Media Defence, Dec 14, 2021,

<https://www.mediadefence.org/news/are-fake-news-laws-the-best-way-to-tackle-disinformation/>, VY)

Legislating Disinformation There is an ongoing debate about regulating false news and misinformation. Is legislation necessary to protect citizens from misleading information, or does it infringe on the right to freedom of expression? In March 2017 the UN and regional human rights bodies published the Joint Declaration on Freedom of Expression and "Fake News", Disinformation and

Propaganda. **The Declaration found that criminalising the sharing of information based on vague and ambiguous ideas, such as "false news", is incompatible with international standards for restrictions on freedom of expression.** In spite of the Joint Declaration, **many governments have passed heavy-handed "false news" laws in response to the problem.** For example, following the outbreak, South

Africa approved vague and sweeping regulations criminalising misleading content about the pandemic or the steps taken by the government to respond to COVID-19. In early 2021, the Malaysian government used emergency powers to pass a fake news law after earlier attempts were repealed. The regulations set a jail term of up to three years for publishing or sharing any "wholly or partly

false" information about either the pandemic or a state of emergency that took effect in January. Our role **False news laws undoubtedly hinder the work of journalists and have a chilling effect on freedom of**

**expression. Where possible, we challenge these laws at a national and regional level.** In December 2014, a Zambian High Court Judge struck down the provisions of section 67 of the Penal Code, which prohibited the publication of so-called "false news". In essence, the law required journalists to verify the accuracy of any statements, be it their own or those

made by others, before they could be reported. **With our support, lawyer Marshal Muchende successfully**

**argued that the law was a grave impediment to the freedom of the press.** You can read more about this

decision here. More recently, the ECOWAS Court of Justice delivered a landmark judgment in the case of the Federation of African Journalists and Others v The Gambia. The Court found that state authorities had violated the rights of four Gambian journalists under

false news laws. It found that security agents arbitrarily arrested, harassed and detained the journalists. As a consequence of their reporting, many were forced into exile for fear of persecution. Alongside our primary approach of taking strategic cases, which aim to have these laws declared unconstitutional, we also support individuals. This year alone, we are funding the emergency defence of

journalists facing false news charges in Bangladesh, Rwanda, Cameroon and Poland. Education not legislation **Effectively combatting misinformation remains a pressing contemporary issue, with jurists, academics,**

**and activists suggesting various remedies. Whatever approach we take, it is essential that we**

**curb disinformation without violating freedom of expression.** Increasingly, governments are turning to social and educational strategies to combat misinformation. This avoids broad legislative provisions that criminalise or infringe on the right to freedom of expression. Take Finland, for example – recently rated Europe's most resistant nation to fake news.[6] The country has started teaching children how to identify false news in primary school through Media and Information Literacy. To reinforce these skills, secondary schools introduced multi-platform information literacy in 2016. Strong critical thinking is a core, cross-subject component of a national curriculum. Other countries, such as Nigeria, Canada and the Netherlands, are taking similar approaches. We are also seeing a growing investment in fact-checking. Over the past decade, independent fact-checkers have emerged in more

than 50 countries spanning every continent. According to the most reliable global count, 113 such groups are active today.[7] Back in 2019, we joined forces with the International Fact-Checking Network and the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press to

provide a new mechanism for fact-checkers. As the demand for fact-checking increases, so too does the abuse and harassment that independent fact-checkers face. This partnership helped to ensure fact-checkers could continue doing their important work, by

providing legal support and publishing guides to help navigate and mitigate emerging threats. Conclusion The advent of the internet has facilitated the spread of false news – both more quickly and more widely than ever before. This misinformation can fuel political

polarisation, impact elections, and disrupt public health. **Yet it is essential that we avoid far-reaching legislation**

**that violates the right to freedom of expression.** Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States,

Anthony Kennedy, in his majority decision in *United States v Alvarez* held that **"[t]he remedy for speech that is false is**

**speech that is true. This is the ordinary course in a free society."** **Media and Information Literacy strategies, coupled with fact-checking and the publication of counter-narratives,**

**remain the primary vanguard in the fight for the truth.**

**A free press that can openly report is necessary for democracy. This turns their democracy impact.**

### **Policinski 2021**

("You Can't Have Democracy Without A Free Press," Gene Policinski, senior fellow for the First Amendment, Freedom Forum, March 10, 2021, <https://www.freedomforum.org/2021/03/10/you-cant-have-democracy-without-a-free-press/>, VY)

**There's a reason we need a free press, despite its faults and foibles: Democracy won't work**

**without it.** The grand experiment in self-governance that is the United States is rooted in trust and confidence we all will work toward the greater good. But the nation's founders had experience with a king and his expected benevolence — and what could happen when things didn't work out. So, they provided for three branches of government to balance each other, along with periodic elections and the rights for us to assemble and seek change when we think things have gone astray. All fine, but also relatively long-term solutions. **How do we know what our government is doing, how well it is operating or**

**whether our elected officials are up to the job? Enter the only profession mentioned in the**

**Constitution: A free press, to serve as a "watchdog on government." A free press the**

**government cannot control, to offer an independent, regular update on behalf of the rest of**

**US.** Let's stop to acknowledge that many of us are dissatisfied with the free press we have. Survey after survey shows low public trust in our news outlets and in the journalists who staff them. But in those same Freedom Forum surveys about the First

Amendment that began in 1997, **the desire for that watchdog role remains high, often supported by a majority of people questioned.**

## 2NC/1NR Social Media Disinformation Extensions

**Social media leads to an echo chamber where extreme positions are amplified and spread. This is inevitable in social media and caused by human psychology, not Russia or cyberattacks.**

### **Menczer and Hills 2020**

("Information Overload Helps Fake News Spread, and Social Media Knows It," Filippo Menczer, Luddy Distinguished Professor of Informatics and Computer Science at Indiana University, and Thomas Hills is a professor of psychology and director of the Behavioral and Data Science master's program at the University of Warwick in England, December 1, 2020, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/information-overload-helps-fake-news-spread-and-social-media-knows-it/>, VY)

Most of us do not believe we follow the herd. But **our confirmation bias leads us to follow others who are like us, a dynamic that is sometimes referred to as homophily—a tendency for like-minded people to connect with one another. Social media amplifies homophily by allowing users to alter their social network structures through following, unfriending, and so on. The result is that people become segregated into large, dense and increasingly misinformed communities commonly described as echo chambers.** At OSoMe, we explored the emergence of online echo chambers through another simulation, EchoDemo. In this model, each agent has a political opinion represented by a number ranging from -1 (say, liberal) to +1 (conservative). These inclinations are reflected in agents' posts. Agents are also influenced by the opinions they see in their news feeds, and they can unfollow users with dissimilar opinions. Starting with random initial networks and opinions, we found that the combination of social influence and unfollowing greatly accelerates the formation of polarized and segregated communities. **Indeed, the political echo chambers on Twitter are so extreme that individual users' political leanings can be predicted with high accuracy: you have the same opinions as the majority of your connections.** This chambered structure efficiently spreads information within a community while insulating that community from other groups. In 2014 **our research group was targeted by a disinformation campaign claiming that we were part of a politically motivated effort to suppress free speech. This false charge spread virally mostly in the conservative echo chamber, whereas debunking articles by fact-checkers were found mainly in the liberal community. Sadly, such segregation of fake news items from their fact-check reports is the norm.**

**Fake news stories are distributed by political extremists, not Russia.**

**Cybersecurity won't solve.**

### **Marshall 2020**

("Who shares the most fake news? New study sheds light," Lisa Marshall, June 17, 2020, <https://www.colorado.edu/today/2020/06/17/who-shares-most-fake-news-new-study-sheds-light>, VY)

Fake news at the fringes **In all, about one-fifth of users at the far ideological extremes were responsible for sharing nearly half of the fake news on the two platforms.** "It is not just Republicans or just Democrats, but rather, **people who are—left or right—more ideologically extreme,**" said Hopp. **Those in the ideological middle and those with high levels of media and social trust were—generally speaking—the least likely to share fake news.** "People with high levels of social trust are more likely to compile online social networks comprised of diverse individuals, and this can hamper the spread of fake news," said Hopp, noting that when a fellow user calls out a post as inaccurate, others may be less likely to share it. "If someone posts something that is incorrect, false or misleading, I don't think it hurts for individual users to provide a factual rebuttal." The authors note that the sample is not necessarily representative of the general population of all social media users nationwide, and more research is necessary. With several other papers in the works, **the authors,** including Assistant Professor of Journalism Pat Ferucci and Assistant Professor of Advertising Chris Vargo, **hope to provide insight to lawmakers, companies and individual users hoping to stem the fake news tide. "We can disagree, but when we have fundamentally different views about what information is true and what is not, democracy becomes very difficult to maintain,"** said Hopp.

## **Algorithms which run social media newsfeed preferences are biased towards outrage and views, thus promoting news regardless of its accuracy or reliability.**

### **Stewart 2020**

("America's growing fake news problem, in one chart." Emily Stewart, 2020, December 22, Vox. Retrieved June 17, 2022, from <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2020/12/22/22195488/fake-news-social-media-2020>, NAUDL)

There's now a running debate among academics, analytics experts, and observers like Roose around what we know about what's happening on Facebook and why. Dartmouth political scientist Brendan Nyhan recently argued that "likes," comments, and shares are just a small part of what people actually see on Facebook, and that it's difficult to draw conclusions from these interactions alone or to know what they might mean for an election. Still, the trend is concerning. **Social media is making political**

**polarization worse in America, and it's often the case that people no longer agree on even basic facts. What people consume shapes what they see — basically, someone clicks on a certain article and algorithms start to predict what else they might like in alignment with that.**

And the further down the rabbit hole they go, the more they begin to seek out that media, often winding up in an information bubble. For people who complain so much about supposed social media censorship, they are not really being censored Republicans have spent years complaining that social media companies are biased against them and that their content is being censored and removed. President Donald Trump has often lashed out against tech companies with unfounded claims of bias. He and his administration have also attempted to undercut and scrap Section 230, a law that basically says social media companies are allowed to police their platforms however they want and aren't liable for the content third parties post on them. (Recode's Sara Morrison has a full explainer on Section 230. Rather than bias toward a certain political leaning, **social media algorithms are often**

**biased toward outrage — they push content that people have an emotional reaction to and are likely to engage with.** The NewsGuard data and other **research shows that people are increasingly**

**being drawn to unreliable content** — and often, unreliable content that has a conservative bent. And that content can influence all sorts of attitudes and cause confusion on even basic facts. The New York Times recently took a look at Georgia and how misinformation and unreliable news is playing a role in the US Senate runoffs there. A conservative local news network called Star News Group announced it would launch the Georgia Star in November, and NewsGuard's analysis found that the website has published misleading information about the presidential election and the Senate races. One story making false claims about Georgia's presidential election results reached up to 650,000 people on Facebook. Combating fake and misleading news would require efforts from multiple stakeholders. Yet Facebook recently rolled back changes to its algorithm that would promote news from reliable sources. **Given the pace at which the problem is growing, the matter is likely to worsen without intervention.**

## **Status Quo Solves: Journalists and news reporters already fighting to improve accuracy, reliability, and quality of news information on social media platforms Burns 2022**

(“Journalists give thumbs down to social media,” Greg Burns, Editorial Board member, columnist and business editor at the Chicago Tribune and as a reporter for BusinessWeek magazine and the Chicago Sun-Times, February 9, 2022, Local News Initiative. Retrieved June 19, 2022, from <https://localnewsinitiative.northwestern.edu/posts/2022/02/09/medill-social-media-survey/>, NAUDL)

**Social media challenges journalists to understand its strengths and weaknesses so they can interest an audience and deliver strong, accurate messages, said Melissa Bell, publisher of Vox Media. “It is important for us to recognize how much of an impact social media has had on our reporting,” she said. “There are strengths in it. There are ways to reach people that you couldn’t reach before.”** Journal Editor in Chief Matt Murray warned that journalists should not mistake dialogue on social media for the “richer, fuller, more varied and dramatic” stories that reporters can uncover in “real life.” **“Social media is a tool, from a journalist’s perspective, to be used,” he said. “It’s a tool to get news out there,”**

**Murray said.** The survey indicates that journalists are more critical of social media than are U.S. adults at large. The percentage of U.S. adults saying the companies have too much control over the mix of news they see was 62 percent in a Pew Research Center survey from July 2019. That response was nearly 25 percentage points lower than that of journalists in the 2021 Medill survey. Similarly, the percentage of U.S. adults who said social-media companies provide a worse mix of news was 55 percent in the Pew survey, far less than the 90.7-percent response from journalists surveyed by Medill. Egerly, who oversaw the survey, said its results suggest that social media is not living up to its potential to make vital news stories more visible. **“A clear majority of journalists are seeing the potential gains are not matching the realities,”** she said. “The survey suggests that we’re not seeing quality information reaching a broader audience. That is not the reality of how social media functions.” The University of Minnesota’s Brown, who partnered with Egerly, said she’s not surprised that journalists’ view of social media is more negative than the population’s at large, as measured in other surveys. “We asked journalists to think about: social-media companies and their control; loss of autonomy; and how the work they create is used by other people,” she said. “It doesn’t surprise me that they don’t like the way social-media companies control the news that people have access to. It doesn’t surprise me at all.”