

OUR VOICE >>

Editor's Corner >>

Are journalists under attack?



LIZ ANASTASIADIS '21
Managing Editor

Imagine you're going back to your dorm to watch Netflix on a Friday afternoon. Opening your phone to scroll on Instagram, you receive a message from another student: It's a video of themselves peeing on a The Denisonian newspaper, with your name under the headline. Their piss engulfs the paper before they flush it down the toilet.

As an aspiring journalist, it saddens me that I have to think about this, that I can't write the truths I discover without hatred, anger, and fear on the horizon. However, it's obvious that it would be even worse for larger media channels to get this type of treatment. I wonder how many calls and emails that The Times receives per day.

Social media plays a large role in this as well — think of every internet troll comment you've ever read. And imagine them speaking to you about something they heard their grandma said and claiming it's the truth. What a spit in the face to researching journalists, honestly.

Have you heard of doxxing? It's when someone publishes private or identifying information about a particular individual on the Internet, typically with malicious intent. Think of someone's address, phone number, email, Twitter, Facebook and so on being shared with every internet troll who despises them. This hap-

pens to journalists often in the business — it puts the jeopardy of the reporter's lives at risk but also threatens the family members, children and anyone closely related to the person, treating them as a target. Typically, this practice is used by hate groups and angry readers to scare the writer into silence.

As our Editor-in-Chief, Joey Semel said in his opinion piece last week, the idea of "fake news" is on the rise. "Fake news" and "misinformation" are abstract terms, which gives people in power — such as President Trump — room to weaponize the term in order to denounce news they don't like. This has dramatically exposed more Americans to the debate around the problems it causes for society and likely impacts their view of it as an important issue.

Just a few years ago, those phrases were meaningless. Today, according to a Pew Research Center study, Americans rate it as a larger problem than racism, climate change, or terrorism.

This makes the problems for journalists harder than it has to be and the hate mail to pile up. Not only that, but journalists are being killed all over the globe for simply doing their jobs. This year, 16 journalists have been murdered globally with confirmed motives. In 2018, 36 were killed. Four of them were in the United States, from the Capital Gazette mass shooting.

Do we stop reporting then? What if you have a family of your own? How do you protect them? Yourself?

The media and journalists are important and necessary for social, political and governmental progression. Without them, we would get nowhere. Without them, there would be nothing to talk about. Imagine a world with no news. That's a world I'd rather not live in.

Liz Anastasiadis '21 is a creative writing major with a concentration in narrative journalism from Warren, Ohio.

Greta Thunberg's remarkable gift



DYLAN WALCZAK '22
Staff Writer

Greta Thunberg is a force that we may never see the likes of again for quite some time. She has fueled the fire of climate activism and youth-driven protests in ways teenagers were never considered capable. She has sparked international conversations of political leadership and public policy that others were afraid to entertain. She is challenging the way we think of our planet, our institutions and ourselves.

And one crucial aspect of Thunberg's identity makes it all possible.

Thunberg was recently on CBS This Morning to discuss her international impact throughout these past couple of months. When addressing what allows her to speak so unapologetically, she revealed how she "[has] Asperger's... so [she doesn't] really care about social codes."

When we think of the autism spectrum, we don't immediately identify successful outcomes for those within it. Nevertheless, Thunberg is changing the way we view this spectrum. She embodies common traits of those within the community that would typically be disregarded and corrected. Her brash style and blunt language set her apart on the international stage. Thunberg thus forces us to view the autism spectrum not as a disadvantage, but, as she deems, a gift.

Greta's gift of language is especially important to consider in the context of the autistic community. The majority of those who are specifically autistic are either limited or completely incapable of expressing themselves through language. Those with Asperger's are usually capable of language, but their matter-of-fact perspectives often lead them into conflict or disapproval from others. Greta has established a platform that

praises the perceived flaws of her community as it pertains to communication. She has reassured us of our duty to "speak clearly about what is happening", while having the courage to do so.

This platform has infectiously spread through leaders and citizens around the world. Thunberg has not only challenged her leaders in Sweden; she has presented climate change as a primary concern for all political leaders in a very short amount of time. International youth have also put Thunberg's message on full display. By falling in line with Thunberg's style of promoting change, youth-driven protests are actually incorporating elements of autistic identity, concocting an agenda rooted in unwavering truth and a sense of urgency.

Truthfully, who would've thought it would take a young girl with Asperger's to teach our world's leaders about objectivity, leaders that are deemed mentally capable in the eyes of society? Thunberg was accurate to assert that she should not have to be the one calling for change at the most recent UN summit. Our future should not have to be left to a totality of youth that have come to embody leadership better than their elected leaders. Furthermore, it shouldn't take a community labeled as mentally disadvantaged to reveal the flaws of those that are considered fully capable of themselves and their actions.

And that's not to diminish the value of the autistic community by any means. However, what does this say about our choices in defining leadership? What does this say about how we have perceived the autism spectrum?

If anything, these past couple of months have revealed to us the power of the autistic community when it comes to seeking and addressing the truth. We have also been exposed to the fact that we're not doing a great job in correctly perceiving leaders. We need people like Greta. We need people that, like the autistic community, speak freely and honestly about what they know to be true.

And while climate change is a pressing matter, I wouldn't worry too much with Greta on our side. Just as Asperger's serves as a gift to Greta, Greta will serve as a gift to us.

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The Denisonian

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Staff Editorial

What's the dirtiest place on campus?

Nina: I can't answer conclusively, but I know it's somewhere on south quad. Probably the rusty, moldy showers in King Hall.

Max: Grant Balogh's room in his six-man on the second floor of Beaver

Joey: ^ Retweet

Rohan: Party rooms after "Around the World"

Alina: The Bandersnatch (before their last health code violation)

Cordero: One of the Slayer personal bathrooms on a Saturday night

Nathaniel: The Bullshead Office

Liz: The cave under the library... probably haunted by the Ghost of Lost Red Solo Cups Past.

YOUR VOICE >>

Op-Ed

Make fascists afraid again



CECIL MILLEN '20
Special to *The Denisonian*

“Fascism” is a word that evokes the infamous images of German Nazis saluting the words of a frothing Adolf Hitler.

Until recently, most Americans believed fascism to be a deadly, albeit fringe, ideology in this country. How could America, the land of the free, the self-touted defenders of democracy, ever become a fascist nation? Since the fascist violence at the Unite the Right rally, White Americans have been forced to acknowledge, or willfully ignore, the often brutal reality that almost every immigrant, LGBTQ+, and person of color has instinctively known about this country for years.

Fascism is not a fringe ideology, it is a pervasive and poisonous set of principles to which many of the most powerful people in this country adhere.

Just as we assumed that fascism was a non-factor in this country, we also assumed that it was a non-factor on this campus. Surely it couldn't exist at an institution of higher learning, least of all one that prides itself on crafting discerning moral agents.

Some have posited that an inability to speak openly about right-wing fascist politics is a microcosm of a declining society's unwillingness to engage in critical thought and discussion. Mexican political leader Subcomandante Marcos would counter by saying that, “far from indulging in original, critical thought, right-wing intellectuals become remarkably pragmatic.”

Truly, the avenues for right-wing zealots on this campus are few: action or silence. As Dr. Weinberg's numerous emails will tell you, Denison does not appreciate fascist action, like when right-wing partisans tear down BSU or Outlook's posters. If you are a member of one of these organizations, it is reasonable to not feel safe.

John Steinbeck speaks about fascist sympathizers in his 1936 book, *In Dubious Battle*. “They like to be cruel. They like to hurt people, and they always give it a nice name, patriotism or protecting the constitution.”

Steinbeck writes at length about the shameless tactics used by fascists as disingenuous justifications for what is, at the end of the day, just cruelty and hate.

This brings me to Denison's fascism

problem. Recently, the conversation about safety on campus has been insidiously shifted by prominent fascists on this campus who have claimed to feel unsafe and suppressed as a result of their political ideology. That political ideology: legitimize the corrupt power structures that keep them privileged.

Their privilege exists in terms of their race, gender, sexuality, but also importantly, in their ability to remain in the good graces of the wealthy and influential. Like most boot-lickers, they try to identify with and defend the powerful in the hopes of earning their favor.

Bob Marley called them Downpressors, aptly asserting that “they would do anything to materialize their every wish. Woe to the downpressor, they'll eat the bread of sorrow.” This is the sad existence of a Denison fascist: sell your soul for years in the hopes that one day someone with real, material power will be appreciative enough to make it worth your while.

Fascism, and its economic offspring, neoliberalism, are the bible of the .1%. By working on behalf of fascists, their allies, and apologists, not only will the ideology spread, but it emboldens these people, and encourages the belief that fascism will lead to economic gain.

I believe that the seeds of hate sown by Denison's fascists will undoubtedly bear fruits of sadness which they will one day eat, alone. We cannot afford to stand by, waiting for this to happen, because in the short term, these seeds harm people. They make Denison a more dangerous place, and they cannot be tolerated.

In a perfect world, nobody would ever feel unsafe, but we don't live in a Utopia. We live in the United States in 2019, and we need to reckon with the rise of right-wing fascism in whatever ways we can. Hate speech should not be allowed. Even if it is legally protected, no society should tolerate fascism, and each community should take radical steps to prevent its poisonous influence.

My message to you: If your ideology is one that targets already vulnerable groups and makes people who are not like you feel unsafe, then I hope that you feel scared to voice your opinion. I would rather see fascists scared and hiding in the dark than to see them feel comfortable enough to openly espouse their violent ideologies.

Free speech does not protect one's right to shout “fire” in a movie theater, because harm can come of it. For the same reasons, hate speech should not be tolerated on this campus in any way.

Hateful speech leads to hateful action, and as we saw in Charlottesville in 2017, the manifestation of right-wing anger is violence. Personally, I choose right-wing silence.

Cecil Milten '20 is a Spanish and international studies double major from Davidson, NC.

Op-Ed

Rethinking Denison's party scene



JOSH POE '21
Special to *The Denisonian*

What happens when you block an ant's path? It finds a way around that blocked object to get to where it was originally heading. I believe a very similar thing on a much greater scale is happening here on campus.

The party scene here on campus seems to have shrunk greatly. On a recent weekend night, there were only one or two parties that were at very different areas of campus. Being a junior, this is a far cry from what it used to be like here on campus. There used to be seven, eight or even nine parties on any given Friday or Saturday.

We all have been made aware of the situation at the Sunnies and the reasons behind why there can't be parties there. But, there has been a shift that even this situation does not explain. Now, while there are still places to go to have a good time, these places have an increased show of security which sometimes puts a damper on the fun.

At first glance, additional security in these times seems to be a very good thing and feeling secure enough to relax is the key to having fun. However, as someone who goes to these functions, I can see as soon as security shows up the mood shifts and everyone leaves.

I understand the need for heightened security but, I believe we are going about it the wrong way. I feel as if the additional security is actually punishing those who are following the rules. Additional security at parties should allow us to relax and have fun, but it makes a lot of people feel like we are back in high school, children who need to be watched so we behave.

This situation is a confusing one. We know that there have been issues with some parties, and we know that some inappropriate behavior has occurred, but I feel like the right way to address this issue is not by ruining the fun for those who have followed the rules. I agree that there has to be some sort of recourse for those groups or those people who break the rules or worse, but that does not mean punishing the entire student body.

The sensible thing would be to confront the person or persons responsible and deal with them directly instead of just instituting a blanket rule of “no parties.” We should do a better job of cracking down on those people rather than limiting the number of parties. I understand that the buildings in the Sunnies are not fit to hold parties and that the school is trying to stop parties from being held there by creating the party barn.

The party barn is a good idea,

in theory, but it is in a bad location where students do not want to be, and where they are being watched over like little kids. And, the new policy of cracking down on any party that is thrown seems to me like the wrong thing to do. I feel like the school is doing this in order to stop bad things from happening. But it seems to me that the opposite is happening.

Here is where the ant and the obstacle analogy comes in. In order to still have a good time, students are going around the rules and are simply having low key parties in their rooms. This surely does not stop those bad things that the school wants to put a stop to from happening. We still have cases of over drinking, misconduct, and worse occurring, but now it is just happening behind closed doors.

You see, when they meet an obstacle people just work around it, students still want to want to have fun, go to parties, be with their friends and they are going to find a way to do that. Rules and regulations are not going to stop them. But cracking down on and issuing punishments for the people who are causing the issues at parties just might stop the problems from happening.

Simply saying “no more parties” is not going to stop hazing. However, punishing people who are doing the hazing will. Outlawing parties does not stop sexual assault, but harsh punishment for an assaulter just may. Punishing those who follow the rules is not the answer, though, and it is actually extremely annoying.

Students who like me spend every weeknight doing homework until 1 am or later and stress over work constantly need to have an outlet for that stress and to have a good time. Denison is an intensely academic school that requires a lot of work and we need to be able to have fun and have an outlet for the stress we are under. Being constantly scrutinized at a party in the party barn is not that outlet.

A big part of growing up is learning how to handle yourself in a social setting. These faux parties are not real social settings for the students and having security personnel force you to behave is not the same as learning how to behave. It is also teaching students to circumvent the system.

I am not a disgruntled frat boy who just wants to party. I am the kid who works extremely hard during the week to the point of near insanity and during the weekend I just want to go have fun and this campus is not providing me that chance.

I, like the majority of students at Denison, am not old enough to go to bars in town. There are not many restaurants to hang out in or movie theaters to go to.

So on the weekends what am I, and my fellow students supposed to do? Is it going to come down to us having to leave campus to have fun? I highly doubt that is what the school wants, but what is the alternative?

The bottom line is that I feel like I, as well as the other students, am being treated like a child and watched like a hawk when I am simply trying to blow off steam and have fun. And as is the case in a lot of instances, one bad apple spoiled it for everyone.

Josh Poe '21 is a commerce media and the arts major from Bethel Park, PA.

Unpopular opinion of the week

“Cold salsa is nasty. Warm it up.”
- Aaron “Sour Cream and Cheddar” Skubby

Unpopular opinion of the week features weekly opinions that are just really, really bad. If you have an unpopular opinion worth sharing, e-mail it to cosdon_n1@denison.edu.