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Annotated Bibliography

Informational Tribalism is the act of disregarding facts and truth and intellectually isolating one's self by limiting the information one accepts or believes to only those few sources they trust. This distrust of information is usually found in fringe groups or those who believe strongly in conspiracy theories. Tribalism is not isolated to conspiracy groups, however. It also exists in political circles, healthcare (such as anti-vaccination groups), and more. The trend towards Tribalism seems to be growing more rapidly as technological advances make information more readily available to the public. I propose that Tribalism *is* a result of the rapid pace of technological advancements in the past 50 years. However, I also believe there are ways of arresting the trend.

Tribalism is an inherently dangerous phenomenon, one that leads to a rejection of facts and verified information. It does not matter specifically what facts or information an individual uses to replace established truth; Tribalism means questioning and ignoring the foundation of scientific and scholarly research that has been created and built throughout centuries of hard work by individuals and institutions. From the spread of disease caused by anti-vaccination groups to the rejection of science by flat-earth groups, Tribalism has the potential to disrupt modern society in several ways. Bhattacharya, Jolley, and Gordon's articles will be used to explain how Tribalism is the result of a postmodern reaction (albeit a subconscious one) to the rapid technological advancement and how it has disrupted the 'normal' of everyday life. Aupers and Gulbrandsen's works will be used to show more specific methods

on how technology fosters a trend towards Tribalism. Finally, Gulbrandsen, O’Gorman, and the remaining texts will be used to show methods for arresting Tribalism’s growth.

Aupers, Stef. "Trust no one: Modernization, Paranoia and Conspiracy Culture."

European Journal of Communication, Volume 27, Issue 1, 2012, pp. 22-34.

This article discusses the phenomena of conspiracy theories, citing examples such as 9/11 and the assassination of JFK. Instead of looking at the growth of theories as a social and pathological issue, Aupers considers whether conspiracy culture is a product of modernization.

Conspiracy theories are at the heart of Informational Tribalism. Aupers' article looks at how conspiracy culture has grown as a result of modernization, which itself means greater access to information, and how that ironically has led to a distrust in the validity of science facts. This helps explain how and why Tribalism grows.

Aupers' text will be used to explain and chart the growth of conspiracy culture, citing the first major events beginning with the Roswell UFO incident and Watergate in 1972. This article helps to explain that, due in part to the existence of legitimate conspiracies and coverups combined with popular media romanticizing conspiracies (with shows such as the X-Files), Tribalism's growth is due, at least in part, to advancements in technology and not necessarily a change or trend in human intellectual capacity.

Bhattacharya, Saradindu. "Magical Technology in Contemporary Fantasy."

FAFNIR Nordic Journal of Science Fiction and Fantasy Research, Volume 3, Issue 2, 2016,

pp. 39-46

Bhattacharya's text posits that modern fantasy authors substitute or use magic in its various forms as a replacement or analog for contemporary technology. She also says that magic "Works...as an interface between the powerful and the marginalized".

This article discusses the binaries that form in many fantasy stories that separate the magical from the normal and the marginalized from the traditional. By discussing how humans engage with magic or technologies they experience a division in culture.

Fantasy works, especially those Bhattacharya cites (like *Harry Potter*), explore the relationship between individuals with magic and those without. Though set in fictional worlds, parallels can be drawn between the magical characters and their experiences and marginalized groups in the real world, and how they interact with the more 'normal' parts of society and either reject the others or are themselves rejected or marginalized. This can help explain why Tribalism is becoming more pronounced as technology progresses.

Gordon, Mordechai.

"Lying in Politics: Fake News, Alternative Facts, and the Challenges for Civics Education."

Educational Theory, Volume 68, Issue 1, 2018, pp. 49-64.

Gordon's article primarily discusses lying in politics and media, or what many individuals have taken to calling "fake news". The piece makes a clear distinction between lying, opinions, and raw facts, ensuring there is no misunderstanding of the terms.

Fake news is a term that means the spread of news that is intentionally false or misrepresentative. Creating hoaxes or conspiracies to divert attention from a particular issue is another form of fake news. The distrust that fake news stories have produced in the general public correlates to the growing level of Informational Tribalism.

Gordon's text will be used to help determine whether Informational Tribalism is simply a reaction (or overreaction) to the concept of fake news. It will also be used as a starting point to chart the origins of the term fake news and to test any growing trends of Tribalism. Informational Tribalism might only be a result of major news outlets being viewed as less trustworthy, and that distrust spreading to more credible sources like scholarly journals and scientific studies.

Griffin, Gabriele, ed. "Introduction." *Research Methods for English Studies*, 2nd ed.

Edinburgh UP LTD, 2014, pp. 1-17.

Griffin's book on research details specific methods for conducting research and the information a researcher must be aware of before, during, and after the research process. Each chapter is devoted to a specific topic relating to research. Most chapters are written by other authors and highlight their unique experiences with the given research method.

As with other reference works used, Griffin's text provides a great resource for crafting a research paper from beginning to end. It also has guidelines to follow when conducting research using a method an individual might not be familiar with.

I will use Griffin's book as a resource to ensure structural and technical accuracy during the research process. But from a more general perspective, it was the opening chapters of the book that provided the impetus and spark for the topic of Informational Tribalism. Pages 10 and 11 of the introduction discuss the ways technology and trends have opened new possibilities for research, data sharing, and discourse between scholars. It was mention of this growth and the thought of the many social media posts and YouTube videos where individuals denounce a particular fact, group, or theory, that led to the questions regarding why Tribalism occurs and how can it be abated.

Gulbrandsen, Magnus, and Aanstad, Siri.

“Is Innovation a Useful Concept for Arts and Humanities Research?” *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 2015, pp. 9-24.

Innovation is ongoing in almost every academic and scientific field but seems to be lagging in the humanities. This article argues positively for greater innovation within the humanities and explains what innovation means.

This article highlights the disparity between innovation in more scientific fields and that of the humanities. It also discusses the difficulties in seeking innovation in the humanities. It further suggests how innovation is usually something that happens outside of universities.

There are two issues here that relate to Informational Tribalism. The first is that innovation is not always recognized or promoted within the humanities. If educational and research institutions themselves are hesitant to innovate, it's no wonder 'outsiders', or those beyond the reach of academia, can deny facts or hold up around their own beliefs, as it's easy to distrust institutions when they are opposed to change. The second relation relates to *where* innovation takes place. The article argues that innovation usually happens outside of institutions. And if innovation is seen as separate from institutions it can, in the eyes of outsiders, discredit the information produced from a 'reputable' source, since that information seems to be isolated from the wider world.