

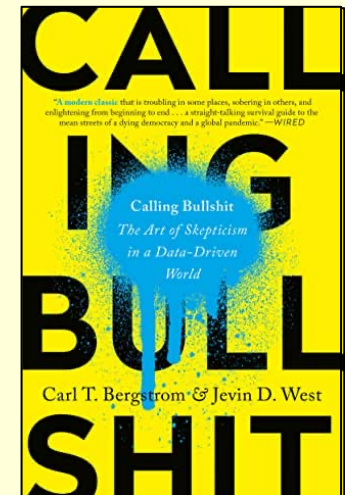
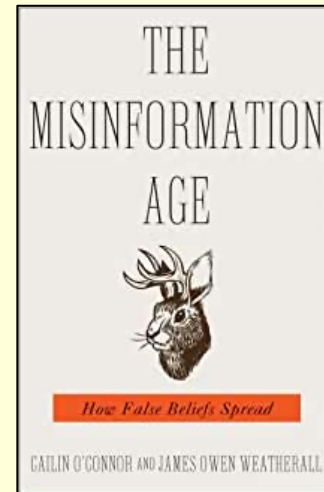
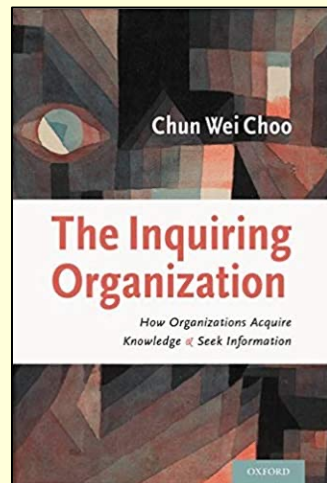
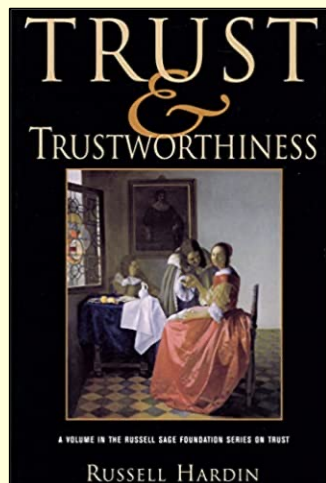
Trust and the Noise of Misinformation



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Outline

- ❖ The Subjectivity of Misinformation
- ❖ Conceptualizing “Trust”
- ❖ The Trusted Employer



The Subjectivity of Misinformation



The Subjectivity of Misinformation

- ❖ **Positivism:** predicated on scientific modernism
 - There is one objective reality/truth, and we simply need to find it
 - Very useful for describing the natural world

- ❖ **Interpretivism:** predicated on post-modernism
 - We construct reality individually, with multiple possible truths
 - Imperative for describing the human social world

Are lockdowns about safety, or freedom?

Are vaccines about protection or control?

The Subjectivity of Misinformation

❖ Many ways of knowing

- Scientific knowledge → Deduction
- Practical knowledge → Induction, Abduction
- Religious knowledge → Authority
- Story knowledge → Authority

Waving evidence at people doesn't work
for three out of four of these

The Subjectivity of Misinformation

- ❖ Quality of our knowledge therefore depends on whom we take as authorities (and how mindful we are about these)
 - Individuals we admire
 - Institutions we are socialized/encultured to revere

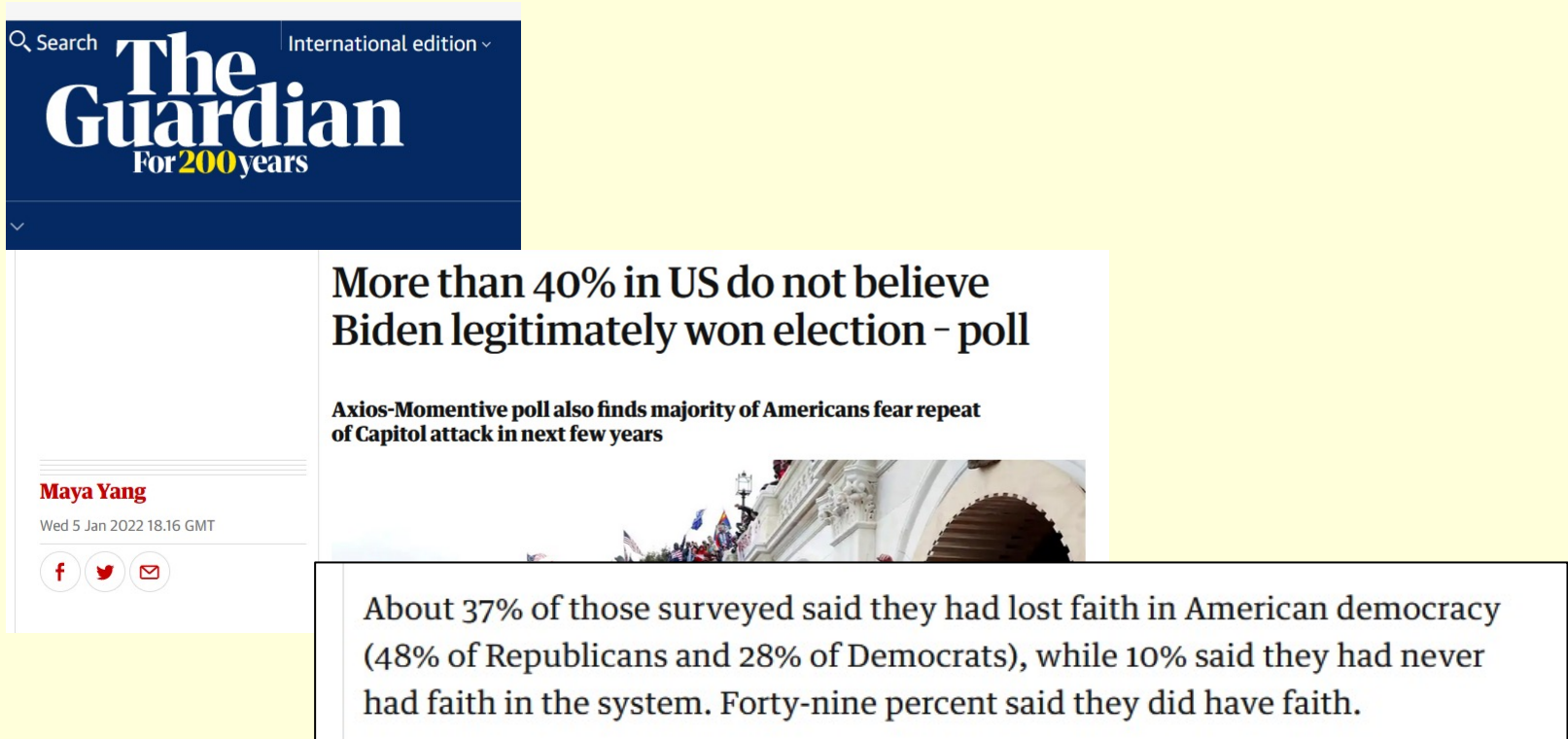
- ❖ Patrick Wilson (1983): Cognitive Authority
 - Most knowledge comes to us “second hand”
 - A cognitive authority is someone you trust and believe



Conceptualizing Trust

Conceptualizing Trust

- ❖ Lowered trust in American democracy attributable to polarization



The image is a screenshot of a news article from The Guardian. The top of the page features the Guardian logo with 'For 200 years' and a search bar. The article title is 'More than 40% in US do not believe Biden legitimately won election - poll'. Below the title is a sub-headline: 'Axios-Momentive poll also finds majority of Americans fear repeat of Capitol attack in next few years'. The author's name, 'Maya Yang', and the date 'Wed 5 Jan 2022 18:16 GMT' are visible. There are social media sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Email. A photograph of the US Capitol building is partially visible. A text box at the bottom of the article contains the following text: 'About 37% of those surveyed said they had lost faith in American democracy (48% of Republicans and 28% of Democrats), while 10% said they had never had faith in the system. Forty-nine percent said they did have faith.'

The Guardian
For 200 years

Search International edition

More than 40% in US do not believe Biden legitimately won election - poll

Axios-Momentive poll also finds majority of Americans fear repeat of Capitol attack in next few years

Maya Yang
Wed 5 Jan 2022 18:16 GMT

f t e

About 37% of those surveyed said they had lost faith in American democracy (48% of Republicans and 28% of Democrats), while 10% said they had never had faith in the system. Forty-nine percent said they did have faith.

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/jan/05/america-biden-election-2020-poll-victory>

Conceptualizing Trust

The Atlantic

POLITICS

What's Really Behind Global Vaccine Hesitancy

Countries with low vaccination rates are suffering from more than just inequity.

By Olga Khazan

THE WORLD OVER, people feel lied to, unheard, and pushed aside. They no longer have any faith in their leaders. They're lashing out against their governments and health officials, in some cases by rejecting the COVID-19 vaccine.

Conceptualizing Trust



<https://www.thestar.com/news/investigations/2022/03/19/how-vaccination-status-might-predict-views-on-the-russian-invasion-of-ukraine.html>

Conceptualizing Trust

❖ Observed on Twitter:

- Those engaging in “troll” behaviour attacking scientists frequently identify with cryptocurrencies

❖ Heard on Twitter:

- “If anyone gets in your face and asks why you are wearing a mask, just say: *‘I wear a mask because of the deep state’s facial recognition system’.*”

Conceptualizing Trust

- ❖ Trust is a simple term ... perhaps until you try to define it succinctly!
- ❖ How do you define “trust”? (a really complex social construct!)
 - Cognitive?
 - Affective?



Conceptualizing Trust

- ❖ Hardin's (cognitive!) answer: “**encapsulated interest**”
 - my expectation that you respecting my self-interest is contained *within* your self-interest
 - My belief that you have some incentive to keep my trust
 - Note that merely having overlapping interests does not qualify (“the enemy of my enemy is my friend”)

- ❖ The bar for **mistrust** is much lower: a lack of the above

Conceptualizing Trust

❖ “Thick relationships”

- Overlapping networks of relationships between A and B can engender trust – a higher likelihood of incentive to encapsulate interest

❖ “Trustworthiness”

- Characteristics of another that signal capacity to be trusted
- Cognitive trust – willingness to consider advice
- Behavioural trust – willingness to act on advice

Conceptualizing Trust

❖ Trust motivators (which matter at work!)

- Cooperation – as social creatures we all fare better by cooperating
 - Successful cooperation builds trust, and trust engenders successful cooperation
- Reputational – forward consequences of being a trusted person
 - Hardin: distrust is NOT a decision, but a consequence of perceiving someone to be untrustworthy

The Trusted Employer



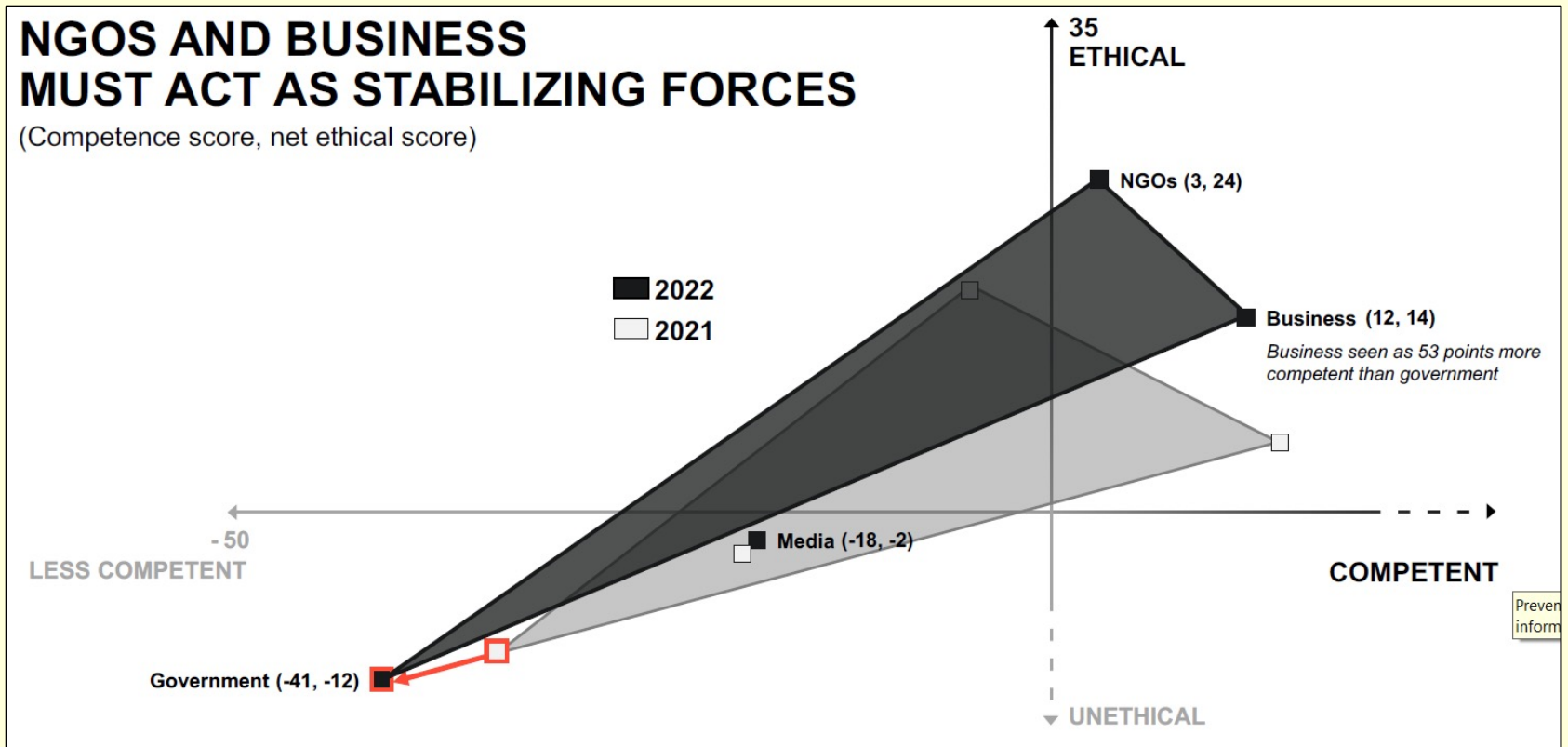
The Trusted Employer

- ❖ Those who are trusted can have an outsized impact on what we believe
 - The pandemic has produced dangerously fractured realities concerning what's safe
- ❖ **The Edelman Trust Barometer:**
Employers have emerged as higher trust entities in the pandemic
 - Remote working arrangements demonstrate encapsulated trust



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❖ From the Edelman 2022 Trust Barometer:



<https://www.edelman.com/trust/2022-trust-barometer>

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HEALTH AUTHORITIES AND MY EMPLOYER MOST BELIEVABLE SOURCES ON HEALTHCARE ISSUES

Percent who believe a piece of information or a news story about a health or healthcare issue from each source automatically, or after seeing it twice or less

Communications from...

National health
authorities

My employer

National
government

Traditional
media

Major
corporations

My social
media feed

Nr. of times they need to see
the information repeated
before believing it:

Once or twice

If I see it here, I will
automatically assume it is true

I will never believe it is true
if this is the only place I see it

55

53

50

45

43

31

41

42

38

36

34

23

14

11

12

9

9

8

14

12

17

17

22

36

<https://www.edelman.com/trust/2022-trust-barometer>

The Trusted Employer

NEARLY 8 IN 10 EMPLOYEES EXPECT THEIR COMPANY TO PLAY A MEANINGFUL ROLE IN GOOD HEALTH

Percent of employees, across all industry sectors, who say

I expect my employer to **play a meaningful role** in making sure I am as healthy as possible

Global 9

77%

Actions my employer needs to be taking to ensure I am as healthy as possible:

Create a healthy office environment

68

Implement health policies

66

Provide health incentives and information

62

Offer mental health support and prevent burnout

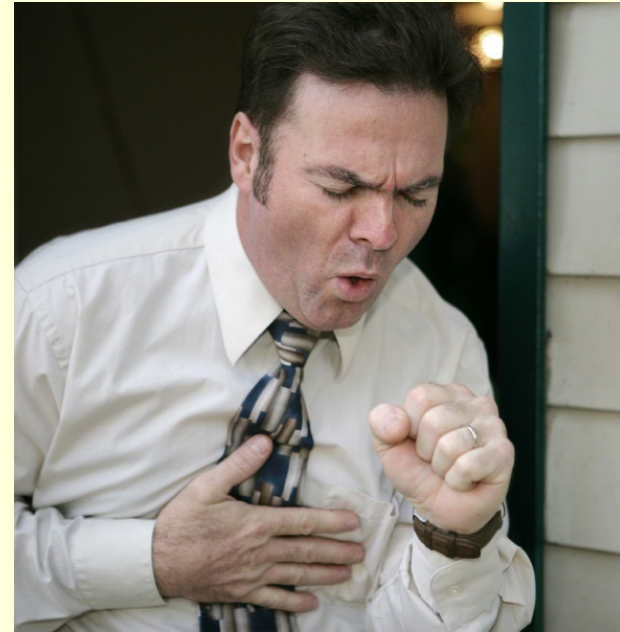
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<https://www.edelman.com/trust/2022-trust-barometer>

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❖ The tragic case of a medium-sized NGO


- Sudden shift from locked down to no restrictions
- No masking rules, no protections for lower pay jobs with significant exposure
- Stakeholder meetings & events where COVID spreads: “It was worth it”
- CEO gets COVID, coughs at office without a mask
- Middle managers may never trust leadership again




The Trusted Employer

❖ Urgently needed messaging in a **trusted employee relationship**, given dangerously fractured realities about COVID-19

- COVID-19 is a vascular and neurotropic disease
- Vaccination reduces risk of severe illness
- Serious risk to unvaccinated children <5
- N95 masks that fit well
- Indoor air quality can be measured and managed



Forcing vaccination
is a huge mistake,
because it violates
trust



OUTRAGE ON PERSONAL LIBERTY!



**MONTREAL WORKING-MEN AND WOMEN
FORCED TO BE VACCINATED!!**