



Fake News & Infodemic

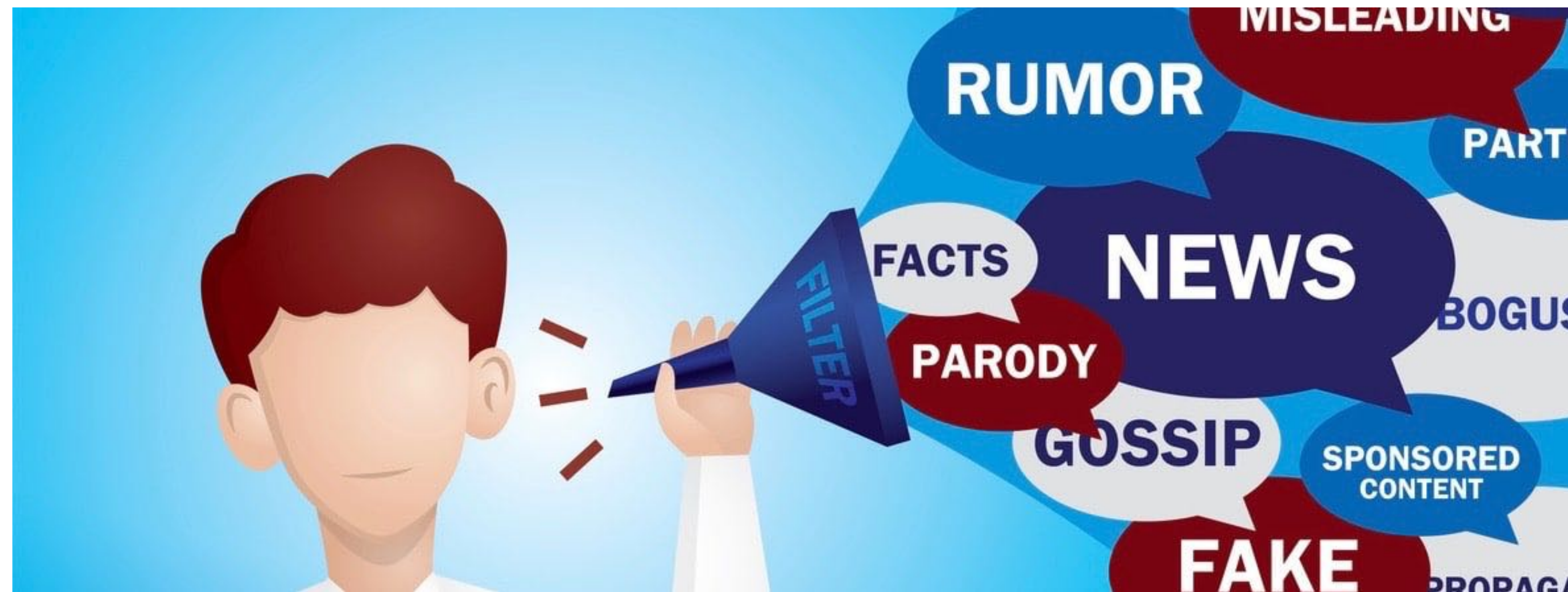
Miloš Gregor, GLCb2012

Nov 7, 2023

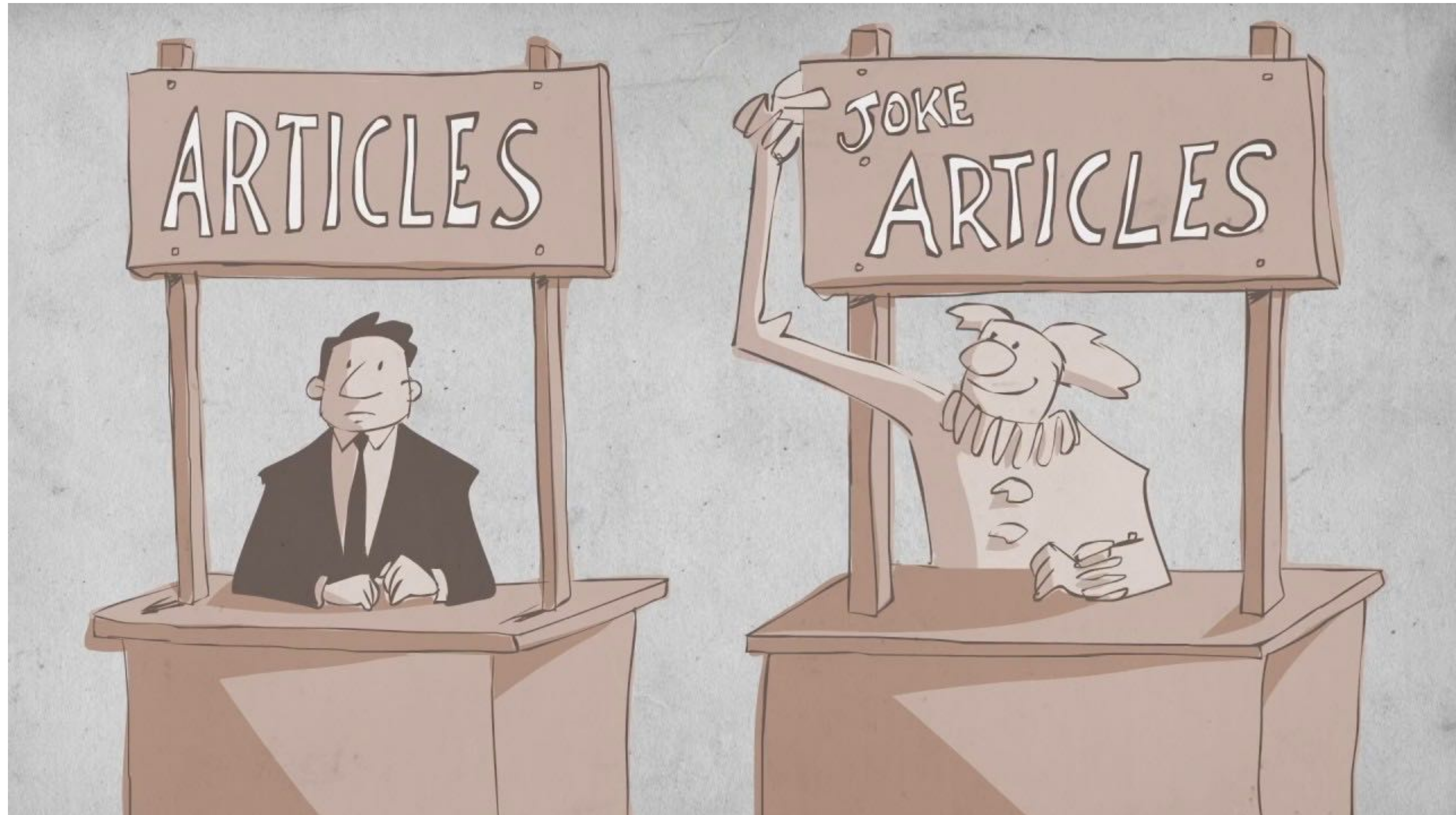
playground

fake news, disinformation, propaganda, etc.

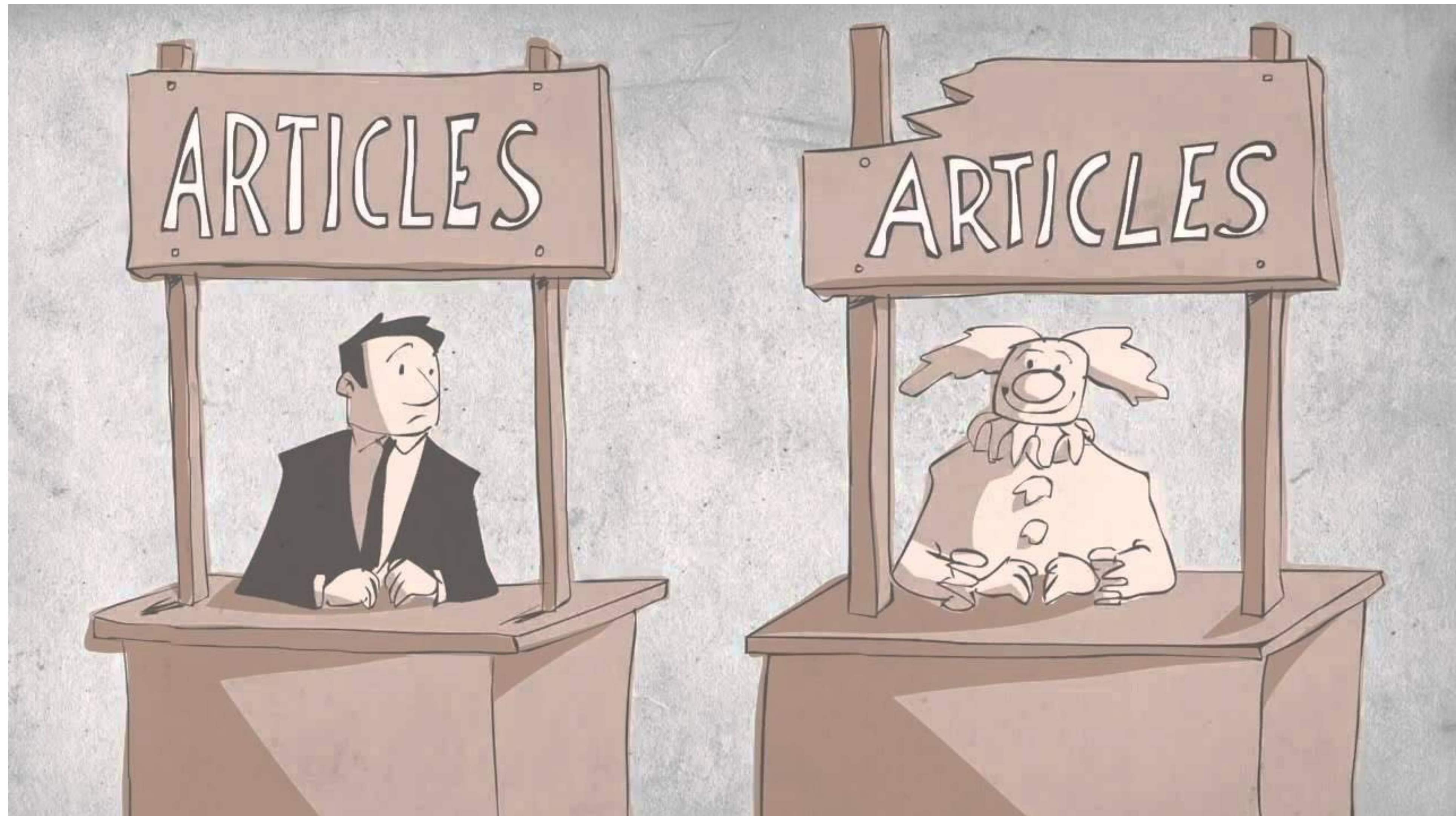
- ▶ hybrid warfare
- ▶ information warfare
- ▶ propaganda
- ▶ disinformation
- ▶ fake news
- ▶ persuasion



media transformation



media transformation



media transformation

- ▶ everybody can be a “journalist”
- ▶ information and social bubbles
- ▶ algorithms



what messages do we receive by e-mail

- ▶ fun/leisure e-mails w/ jokes or recipes
- ▶ **e-mails replacing news**
- ▶ **e-mails trying to get our personal information**



risks associated with chain emails

- ▶ we don't know the author
- ▶ capture unverified information
- ▶ false credibility
- ▶ influence on our opinions and attitudes
- ▶ misuse of e-mail addresses and other data





why do we trust the chain e-mails?

- ▶ reverse rationalization
- ▶ emotions :-(
- ▶ **URGENCY !!!**
- ▶ automatic trust vs painstakingly built skepticism
- ▶ confirmation bias
- ▶ sleeper's effect
- ▶ return to normal (usually in healthcare)

„A man believes what he wants to be true.”

Francis Bacon

why do we believe it?

A ball and a bat cost 110 EUR.

If the bat costs 100 EUR more than the ball,

how much does the ball cost?

why do we believe it?

5 EUR

(5 + 105 = 110)

playground disinformation

Disinformation	Not Disinformation
Malicious lies	Truthful statement
Audio-visual disinformation	Accidental falsehoods
True disinformation	Jokes
Side-effect disinformation	Sarcastic comments
Adaptive disinformation	Accidental truths
Altruistic disinformation	Implausible lies
Detrimental disinformation	Satire

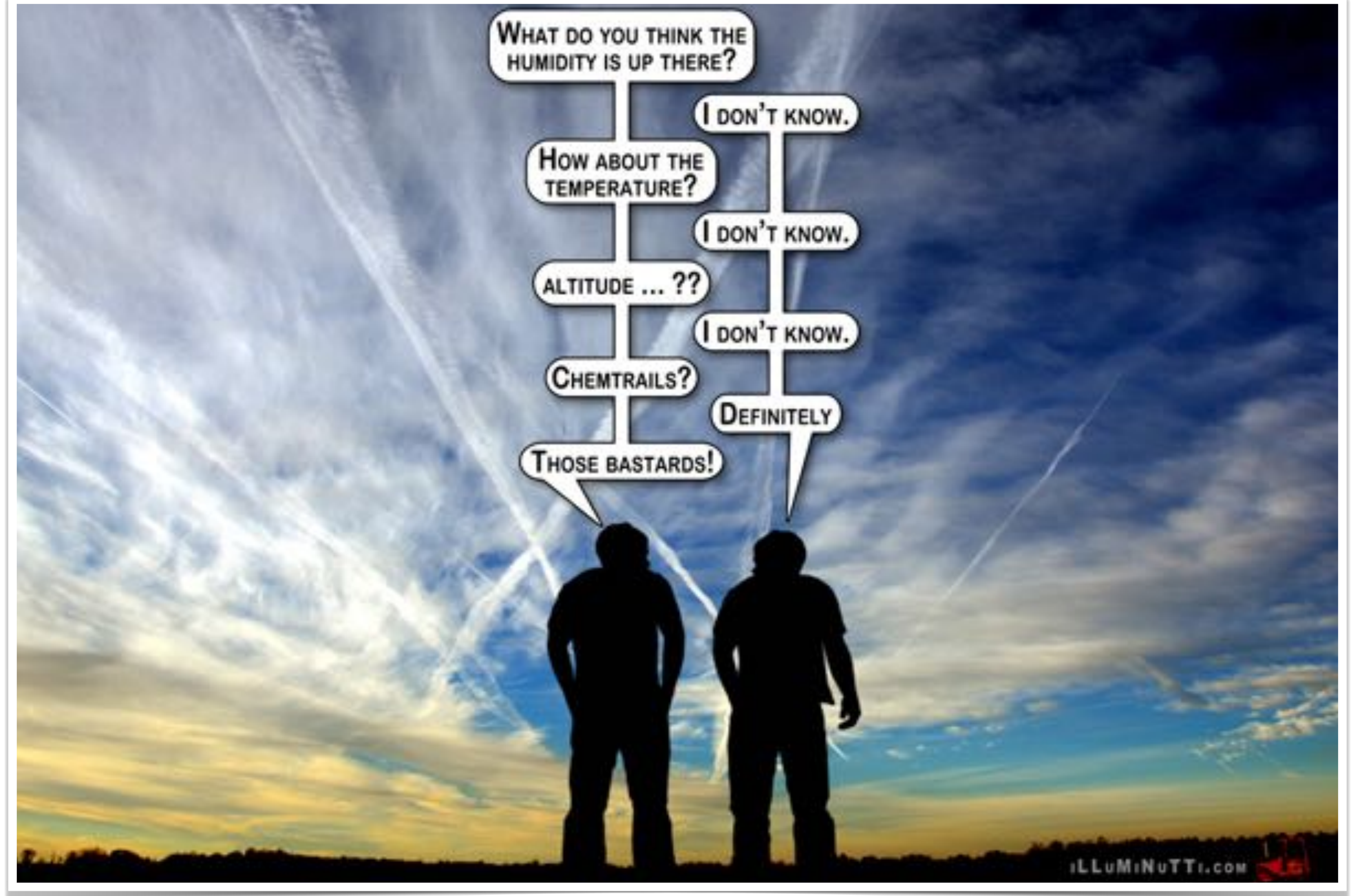
source: Fallis 2015, 415.

playground hoaxes

hoax
↑
hocus
↑
hocus-pocus

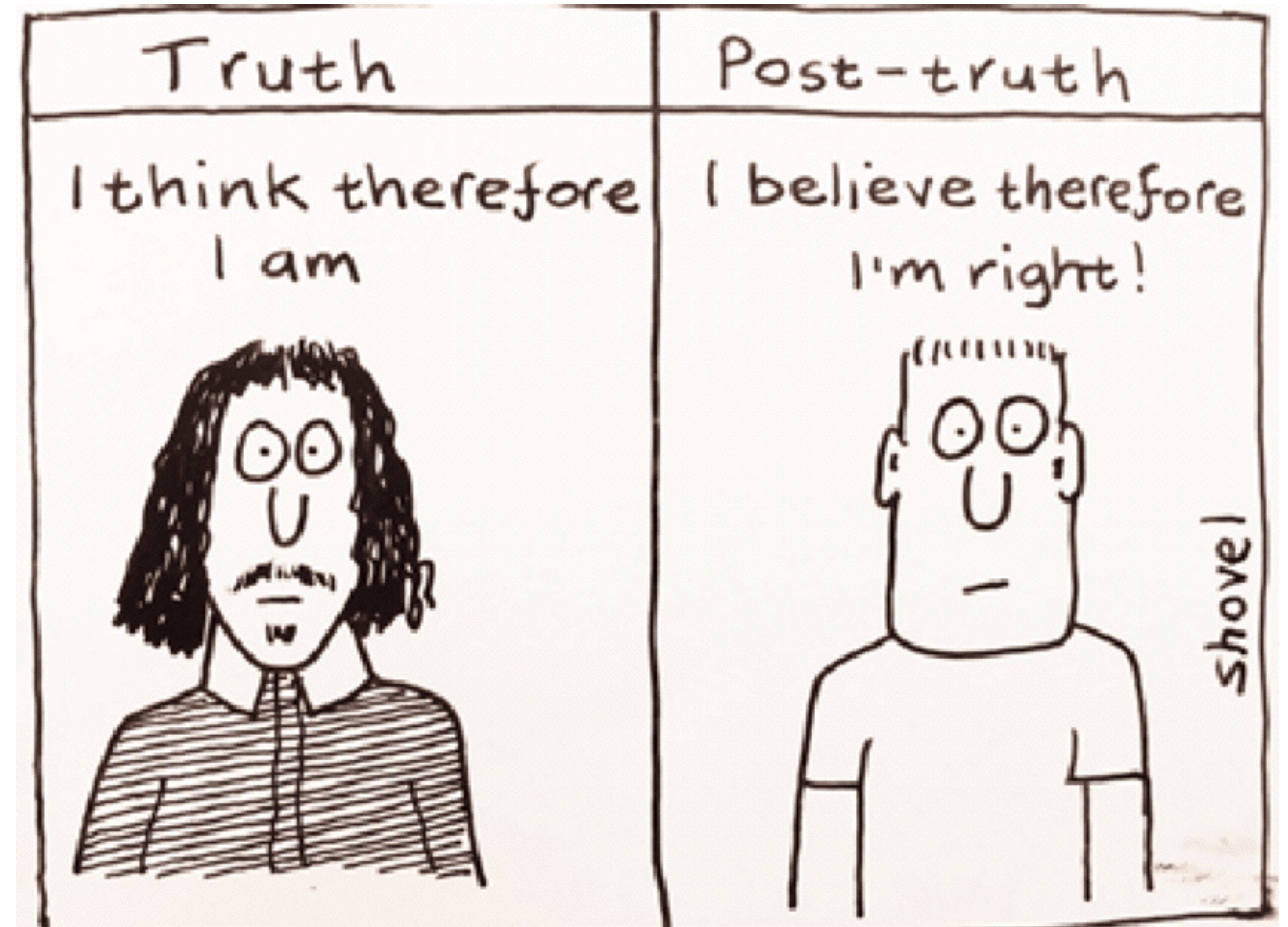


playground conspiracy theories



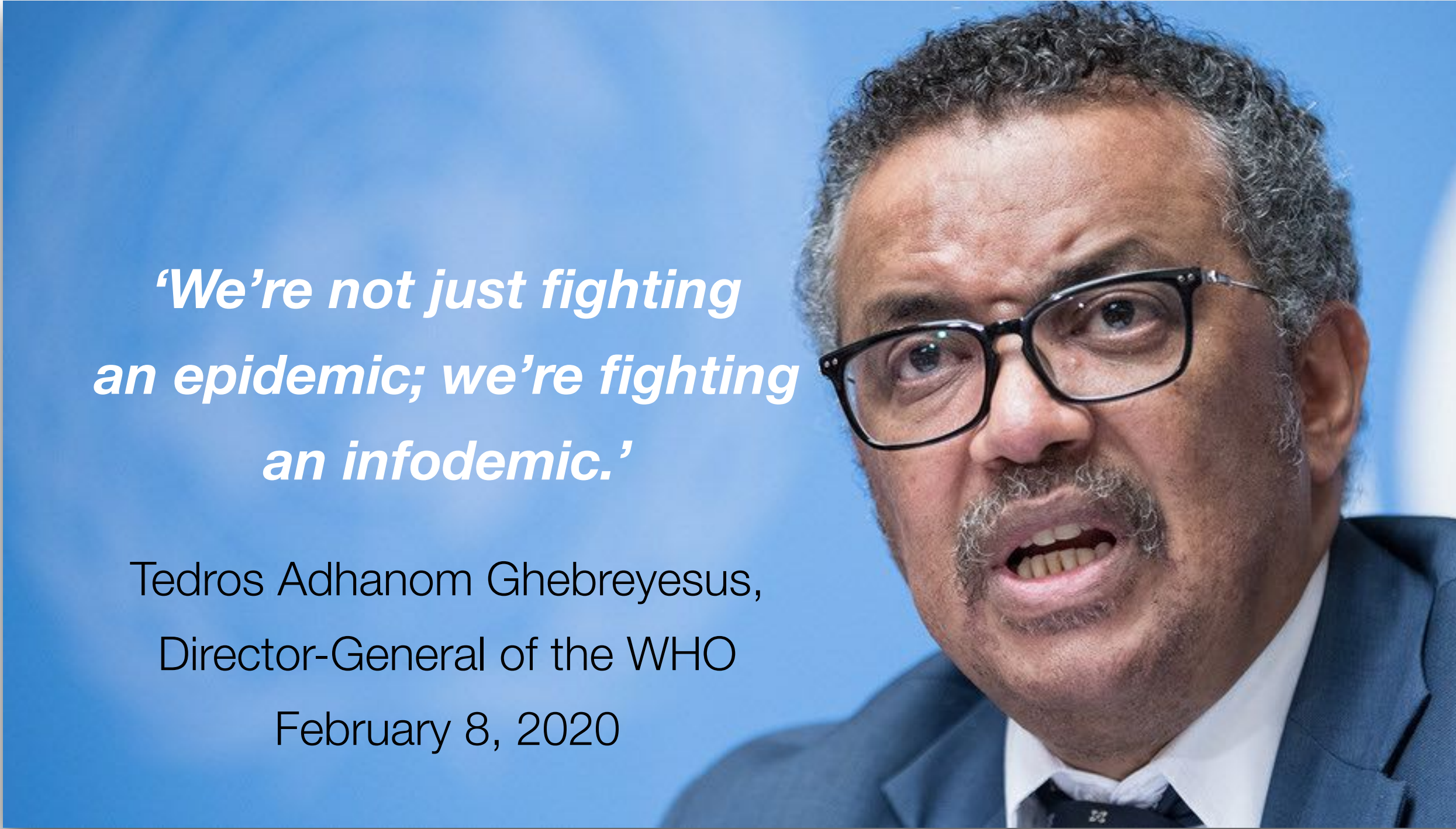
playground post-truth

- ▶ qualitatively new dishonesty
- ▶ politicians who make up facts to suit their narratives
- ▶ so-called alternative facts



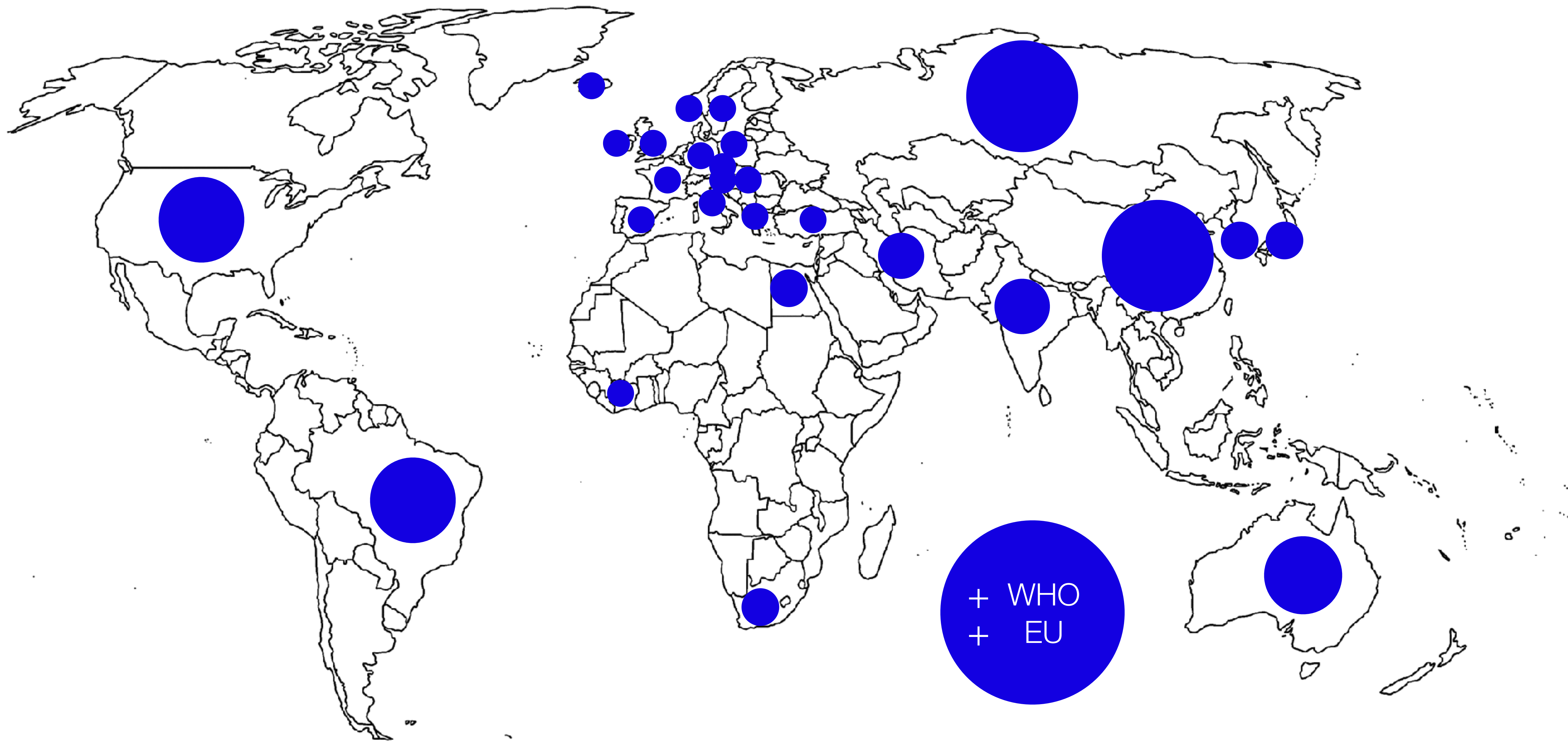
infodemic: post-truth on steroids

- ▶ an acceleration of the spread of misleading information
- ▶ post-truth claim & 'alternative facts' went global
- ▶ seeking of affirmations instead of facts
- ▶ distrust of science & experts



*'We're not just fighting
an epidemic; we're fighting
an infodemic.'*

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus,
Director-General of the WHO
February 8, 2020



assumptions

for the bigger impact of disinformation

- ▶ populist (communication style) politicians
- ▶ polarized society
- ▶ chaotic communication of government
- ▶ weak position of experts



stories & narratives of misleading information

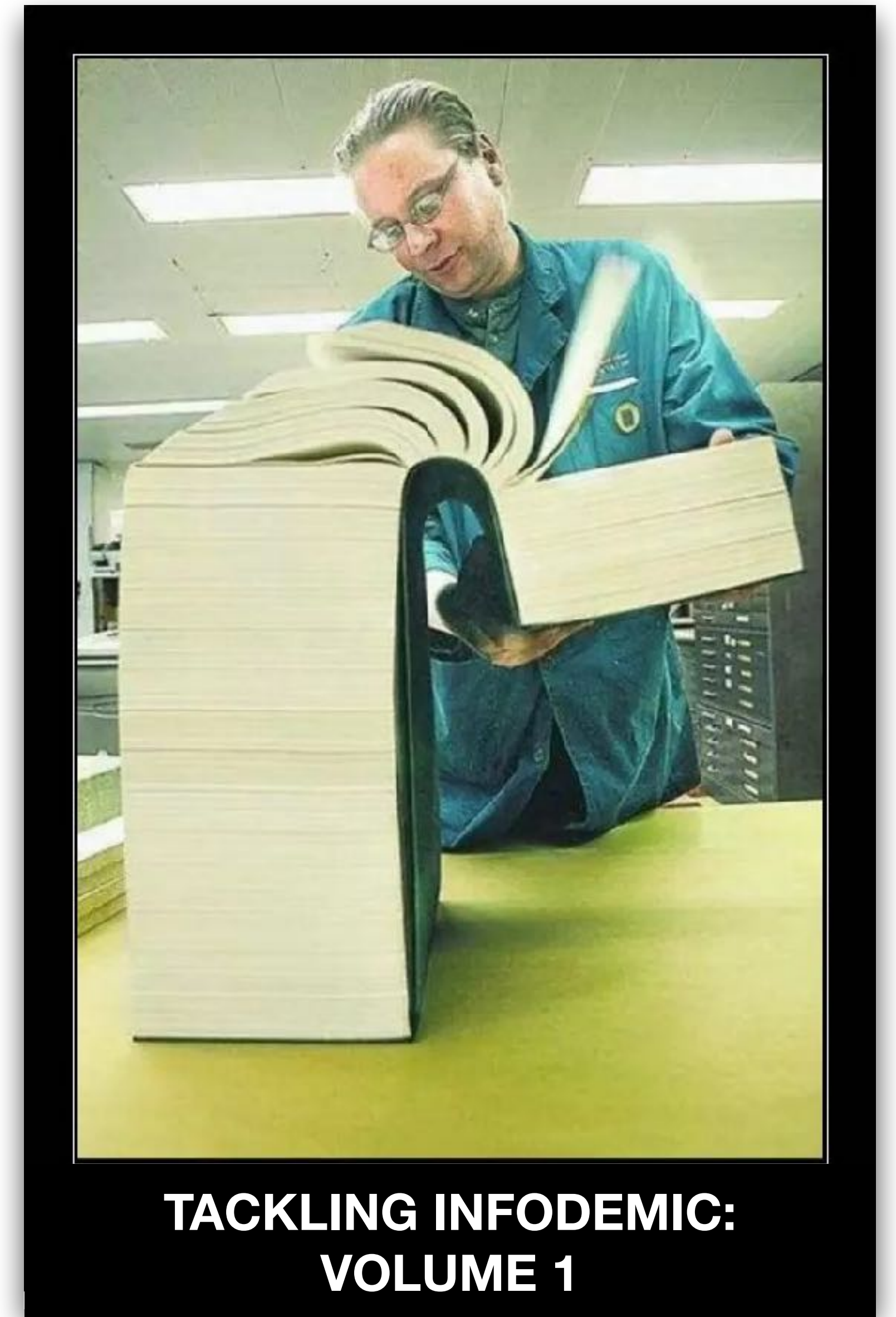
- ▶ origin of the virus
- ▶ 5G
- ▶ prevention & cure
- ▶ Bill Gates, Bilderberg group
- ▶ vaccination



best practice guide

- ▶ experts inform the public directly
- ▶ based on and accompanied by empirical data
- ▶ clear presentation
- ▶ monitoring & debunking

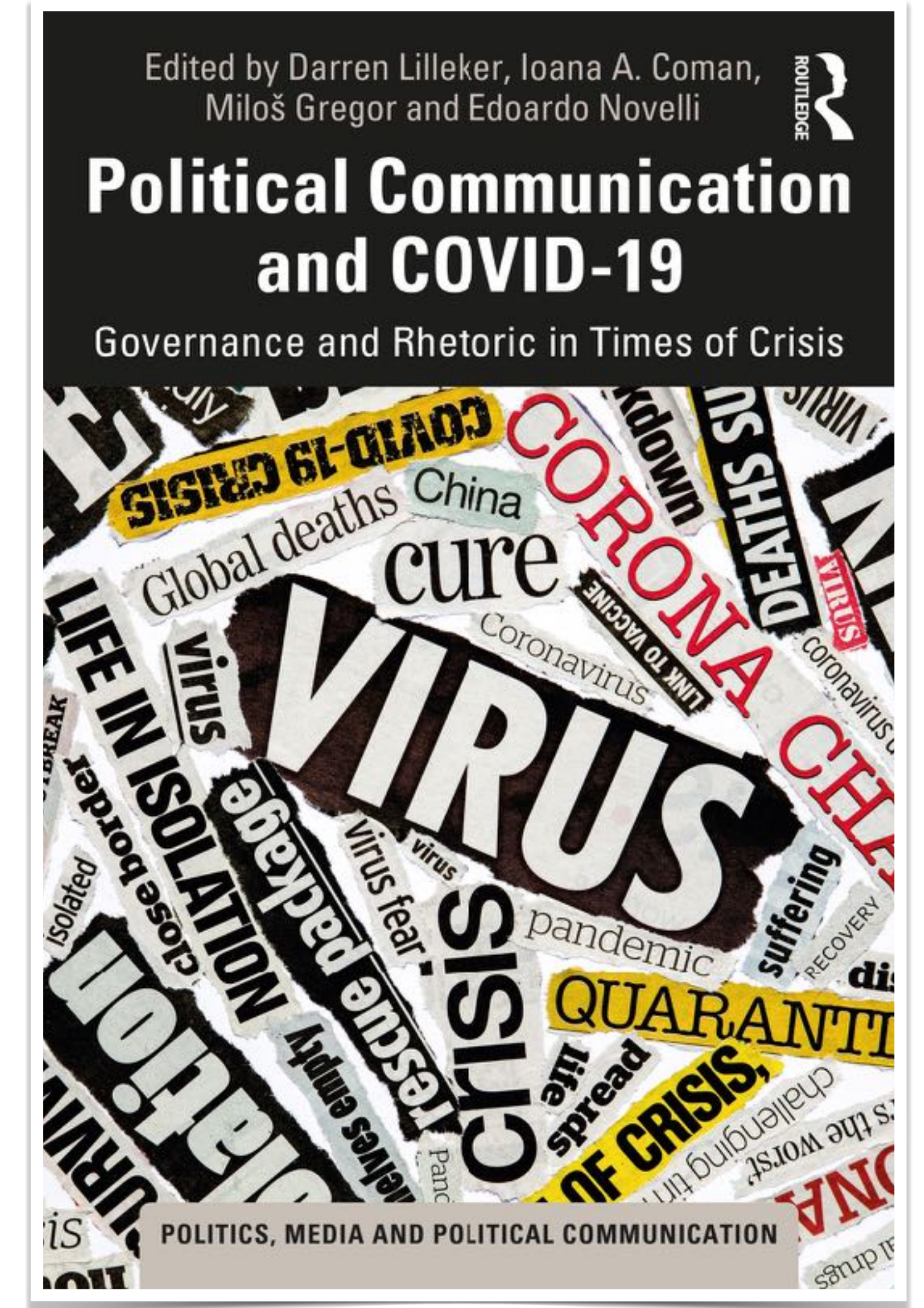
(based on Eysenbach 2020)



conclusion

take outs

- ▶ crucial role of:
 - political culture
 - government
 - experts
- ▶ role of social media:
 - people trust their peers
 - further spread, increase its legitimacy



what has changed due to the pandemic and the war?

- ▶ previously focus mainly on politics before crucial elections
- ▶ the pandemic has shown that not every doctor is an expert - more complex orientation in experts
- ▶ war, on the other hand, is a clear situation - Ukraine victim vs Russia the aggressor

Thank you for your attention.

M U N I



AnselmoCZ



Miloš Gregor



mgregor@fss.muni.cz