

Review of: "When did post-truth begin? From climate change denial to war-mongering nationalism"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

I agree with the author that the planet is in a dire situation, but this requires clear reasoning and persuasive arguments that are capable of creating a constituency for change. I'm not convinced that this article in its present form moves us in that direction. The piece makes bold arguments about important topics but it leaps from theme to theme rather quickly - - fake news, climate denial, nationalism, animal rights. Overall I found the argument unconvincing.

One question is the extent to which one can extrapolate from Twitter messages to broader knowledge in society. Climate denialism, the author would presumably agree, predated the arrival of Twitter.

I'm not sure the problem is lack of information so much as the collective action dilemma and short-run vs long-run trade offs - real interests, not imaginary interests.

I don't see how reactions to COP 15 can usefully be characterized as 'banal nationalism' when as the author notes that is unconscious or semi-conscious practices whereas the reactions to COP 15 that he is talking about (climate denial) are explicit and conscious.

Is nationalism necessarily anti-science? Nationalism has helped to promote investment in major technological innovations, from the space race to microchips to renewable energy. The best chance for tackling climate change may be for nationalists who are in power in China and India to be persuaded that it is in their national interest to tackle climate change. This seems more likely to succeed than advocating for giving voting rights to animals.