Objective, impartial news is the lie that journalism itself has come to believe these days. Media and the journalists who work for them really believe they are independent and impartial. That is the biggest lie they sell the public.

The difference between objectivity and subjectivity is the difference between hard facts and opinions, but in today's news we see facts and opinions intermingled. Even the appearance of objectivity is no longer there. In philosophy and sociology the possibility of real objectivity is doubted. In the media there are always choices to be made in reporting: which subjects to report on and which not, which facts and standpoints to expose and which not, how deeply to question or not to question, the use of language, the use of images, etc. Because the media, like everyone else, are also exposed to conflicts of interest and ideas, reporting is therefore always biased. To be able to speak of independent, objective news there must therefore always be many 'suppliers' who bring news and their opinions to the public. Only then can the diversity of non-objective news approach the 'objectivity' as closely as possible. In the past of the regular media this situation also existed, there was a lot of diversity.
In the Netherlands there have always been different, independent forms of news and opinion, which often differed considerably from each other; a tradition that stretches far into history.... until relatively recently. In 1980 there were 40 publishers in the Netherlands, in 2021 virtually all newspapers in the Netherlands will belong to just two publishers: DPG Group and Media Group. There were over 10 TV broadcasters with completely different current affairs programs, which meant that there were many different opinions and visions to be seen. Now all TV channels in the Netherlands belong to just 2 organizations: RTL group and NPO.

The 'TV broadcasters' exist only in name, the NPO station managers determine. The media have slipped from being independent, pluralistic companies into a uniform sausage with, at most, differences in how it is presented, content that is interchangeable, while there is no censorship.

**Media corporations**

Journalists are all employed by a newspaper, magazine or TV station, of which there are plenty at first glance, so many different opinions and visions you would think ... right? Not so.

Today, almost all media belong to just two paper publishers and two TV broadcasters.

The 'independent press' in fact no longer exists. Virtually all national and regional newspapers, regional newspapers and an increasing number of weeklies are owned by two media multinationals: Media Group and DPG Group. The news on TV belongs to NPO and RTL Group. The diversity of independent media, which a few decades ago still consisted of 40 publishers and more than 10 independent TV broadcasters and the necessary regional ones is gone, taken over by media mega-companies.
But four large media companies have a monopoly on all Dutch news. Is then only their news 'the truth' and those who contradict it untruthful?

Have you ever heard of the saying: 'he who pays the piper calls the tune'?

**Uniformity**

For anyone who looks closely, the news has become very predictable. The media are always outspoken opponents of, for example: Trump, Baudet, Orban, Poland, Russia, the Brexit....

They fight these always by calling them far-right. Those who criticize globalism, however nuanced, are always called populists and anti-democrats, or extreme left-wingers. Media companies always report positively on: energy transition, globalization, 'diversity', the Democratic Party in the USA and the list goes on.... It doesn't matter which newspaper you read or which channel you watch, the tone is somewhat different, but the content is not. When the Brexit was in preparation, the tone was always that Britain would fall into economic ruin, now that it turns out that is not the case, you don't hear anything anymore... About migrants, there is rarely even the smallest critical piece about the consequences of the arrival of tens of thousands of adolescent boys to the West.

If there are tensions in the Middle East it is always Israel's fault. Anyone who does not share the opinion of the media or questions it is an extreme right-winger, anti-globalist, fascist, conspiracy theorist, extreme left-winger, or whatever, one can find a like-minded 'expert' who will come and explain what is going on with 'these people'. Every newspaper, every medium, proclaims the same message for a different target group in a slightly different way.
Objective media corporations?

With the election of Trump, it became clear to many for the first time that "the objective media" are anything but objective. No matter what one thinks of Trump, it just struck one that news and talk shows didn't even bother to maintain even a semblance of objectivity anymore.

Really anything negative they could find was immediately presented as "news" without any further investigation or cross-examination. When Obama was president he was awarded the Nobel Prize without having done anything, there was almost never any bad news about this president. The media have their opinions and preferences ready beforehand. However, the public is entitled to information from both supporters and opponents. No one is waiting for the opinion of the few owners of a media concern. This manipulation of news is subtle. This is done by asking certain questions, framing, interrupting guests or inviting 'experts'. For example, the son-in-law of Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi was repeatedly allowed to give his opinion on Trump as an 'America expert' on RTL Late Night. At Covid we see exactly the same thing. Very obvious questions that should be asked are not asked: how do the very large cuts in hospital and ICU beds relate to the pressure on care that exists with Covid; and to the restrictive 'measures' for citizens who have to go it alone because of 'the pressure on care'. Other facts, opinions, proposals and solutions; no matter how well-founded; are not heard or seen by the media corporations.

Framing

Framing' is a certain technique by which words, pictures and news images are chosen in such a way that only a certain (desired) aspect is highlighted, put in a 'frame' or list. Through words and images one tries to influence and steer the way in which the public looks at reality. The 'frame' becomes a pair of glasses through which we see certain information and not others. This helps to propagate a particular version of 'the news'. Framing ensures that the public only
sees the world from a certain perspective. This can be seen in the 'objective' media, for example, with the word 'conservative', first it was 'conservative', then 'right-wing' and lately it has shifted to 'extreme right-wing'... Orwell called this in '1984': 'Newspeak', facts and events are framed and presented in such a way that everyone thinks that only that is 'reality'. In '1984' there was a whole 'Ministry of Truth' that made sure that everything was 'framed' in the same way. Orwell could never have imagined in 1948, when he wrote his book, that media would ever do this on their own, but that is easy now too, when all media are only in the hands of a few (powerful and rich)... and definitely not in the hands of the average citizen.

Common framing:

- **Camera technique**: cutting and pasting in a recording to make something seem more positive or more negative.
- **Repetition**: repeating slogans, phrases and images over and over again, causing people to take them for true.
- **Negative labeling**: extreme right-wing, anti-globalist, fascist, rioters, conspiracy theorists, undemocratic
- **Scaremongering**: depicting and 'predicting' (small/large) disasters and doomsday scenarios
- **Deception**: bending/distorting things in such a way that they give a false impression
- **Tricks**: presenting something in a clever, deft way, e.g. 'juggling' 'hard' statistics and figures
- **Euphemisms**: calling something more positive than it is: e.g. 'efficiency' instead of: cut back on spending
- **Group pressure**: because: 'everyone else is doing it', 'most people think...', having to do something because otherwise one is 'antisocial
- **Use of authority**: invoking a certain 'expert' or 'institute' in order to command respect for one's own opinion
- **Ordinary 'man'**: pretending to be someone from 'the people' by talking like that or occasionally being filmed dressed like that.
The continued underexposure of important topics

There are topics where media, would it independently serve the interests of its audience, should cut its teeth. For example, on some major influential organizations with strong ideas about the future of the whole world; well-known organizations like the World Economic Forum and the United Nations. Media claim the West is democratic and has a say in developments about present and future. How strange, then, that nothing is reported about such influential organizations that plan the future of the entire world. It is no secret, these organizations just have it open on their own websites. It should be the media's job to bring something like this to the public's attention. However, they are not doing that. On the contrary. They attack those who do. Anyone who questions major developments is dismissed as a supporter of conspiracy theories, the extreme right or an anti-globalist. Anyone who sees what mainstream media reports on the major themes of our time sees that they preach exactly the same ideas as the organizations themselves and never offer any criticism.

The handful of media corporations

“Whoever controls the media, controls the mind” — Jim Morrison
The independent media in 2021 are virtually defunct. The media in the Netherlands do not yet belong to a handful of companies. With a few exceptions, the media have been taken over by ever-larger corporations. Truth telling, diversity and honest information to the public are no longer important. The bought-up media of once very diverse signature are being "harmonized": to all the same gray middle ground and pretty much the same opinion: 50 shades of gray.

This uniformity of content has been achieved by 'replacing' journalists of a different color. Anyone who has been paying attention has seen that in the last 10 years many, even well-known, media figures and journalists with distinctly different opinions have gone. The 'mergers' of media groups are going so fast that on the following internet sites it is often difficult to follow what belongs to whom. What is clear is that the 'independent' media are already concentrated in only three multinational media giants and the end of the concentration is not yet in sight. Usually they are led by just a few CEO’s and almost all of them are owned by just a few rich families. Often these are families with good connections and a dubious past. The entire independent and objective media have thus effectively fallen into the hands of just a handful of powerful people....

The ANP, the General Netherlands Press Office, as the largest news agency, provides almost all media with news: broadcasters, newspapers, magazines, websites. In turn, the media, including the 'quality newspapers', reproduce that news without asking any further. The ANP stands for objectivity and reliability, right? However, the 'free' ANP news agency has also belonged to investors for over 20 years and was taken over again in 2021 by a new investor, the former DSW top executive Oomen. As in the Netherlands, a large part of the global news landscape is in the hands of just a few major players. In addition to e.g. Reuters, Bloomberg and AP, the largest media company in the world is now Alphabet Inc., (Google) with annual revenues of around $200 billion.
Public media:

NPO: Dutch public broadcaster with regional broadcasters

Three board members, three station managers, one for each station.

NPO has a few directors and a network manager per network. The diversity of broadcasting corporations that all have their own board no longer exists in practice. The power of the handful of NPO network managers has increased so much in recent years that independent broadcasting corporations can no longer make truly independent choices about their programs or even about their choice of presenters. Although formally possible, the network manager is responsible for a great deal, and in practice it is a kind of dictator with one person per channel. The Netherlands also once had thirteen independent regional broadcasters. In 2015 the government decided on 'The new public regional media company', in which they were going to regroup.... with the national broadcaster (NPO). Just a year before in 2014, Broadcast West director Milo said: 'If the regional broadcasters are taken over by the NPO, it means the end of regional Tv...'.

Commercial Media:

Many people think that at least the commercial media are still 'independent' and can express their own opinions without government interference. Only a few decades ago this was also the case; in 1980 there were 40 publishers in the Netherlands. The remaining newspapers in the Netherlands are published by two
Flemish publishers: Media Group and DPG-Media; all commercial TV channels will belong to just one company (German Bertelsmann) by the end of 2021. These media corporations, who measure their audience in terms of their "correct" and "right" opinion and are quick to label them as "violent", "right-wing extremist", "neo-Nazi", have in part a racist, colonial and right-wing extremist background themselves. Bertelsmann (RTL Group) with a Nazi past has grown into a major media company only thanks to the NSDAP, DPG media has a history of slavery in the Belgian Congo and the past of a prominent Media Group family consists of 'extreme right-wing' sympathies and a past with the Flemish SS. The pot blames the kettle for seeing black....

**RTL Group:**

From media corporation Bertelsmann that owns all commercial TV stations in the Netherlands by the end of 2021. Germany's media giant claimed to have always been fiercely anti-Nazi, but historical research on Bertelsmann during the war showed that the group's growth was due to the Nazi regime; before that it was an obscure little printer. Bertelsmann provided more Nazi printing than the NSDAP publishing house and was a member of the "SS Sponsor Circle" that supported the SS financially. They published many anti-Semitic works and used Jewish slave labor in their Baltic printing plants; Jewish slaves who had to print the anti-Semitic propaganda themselves ... Bertelsmann is the largest media concern in Europe.

**DPG Media:**

DPG is 99% owned by Belgium's 'Epifin', an Antwerp company, one P.O. Box large. It is the largest media company in our country with 6000 employees, reaching over 90% of the Dutch population according to its own statement. In a tidal wave of takeovers it has in no time swallowed up just about the entire Dutch written news media and publishers: de Press Group, PCM Publishers, VNU, Sanoma Media and Wegener Media. Epifin belongs entirely to one family, which made its fortune with plantations in the old colony of Belgian...
Congo. There was widespread genocide in the Belgian Congo, millions according to historians; they describe plantation owners as "cruel and inhuman. Calling themselves 'quality' newspapers such as: Trouw, NRC, Volkskrant, Het Parool are thus currently, through partnerships, owned by a family that made their greatest fortune through forced labor, racism, torture, murder and concentration camps in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

(DPG: De Volkskrant, Het Parool, Trouw, AD, NU.nl, Intermediair, BN de Stem, Brabants Dagblad, de Gelderlander, de Stentor, Eindhovens Dagblad, PZC, Tubantia, ADR Nieuwsmedia, De Ondernemer, Synpact, Tweakers.nl, Hardware.info, MyChannels, IndeBuurtt and another 250 'region newspapers')

**Media Group:**

A media conglomerate with 4,000 employees. It is owned by three Flemish families who even supply the chairman of the board of directors. Media Ventures is a separate 'Venture Capital' part of the same Media, an investment company. The current chairman's family has a history of what one would now call extreme right-wing, nationalist sympathies. Those who dare to say this nowadays are called fascist. The father was selected during World War II for training at the elite Nazi 'Reichsführerschule'.

In Germany he became assistant chairman of the Flemish organization René Lagrou (the Flemish SS).