

The Enigma of Orwellian Donald Trump: How Does He Get Away with It So Easily?

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Global Research, August 17, 2018

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#), [Police State](#) & [Civil Rights](#)

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"Just stick with us, don't believe the crap you see from these people [journalists], the fake news...Just remember, what you're seeing and what you're reading is not what's happening."

Donald Trump (1946-), American President, (in remarks made during a campaign rally with Veterans of Foreign Wars, in Kansas City, July 24, 2018)

"The Party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears. It was their final, most essential command."

George Orwell (Eric Arthur Blair) (1903-1950), English novelist, essayist, and social critic, (in '1984', Ch. 7, 1949)

"This is a White House where everybody lies." Omarosa Manigault Newman (1974-), former White House aide to President Donald Trump, (on Sunday August 12, 2018, while releasing tapes recording conversations with Donald Trump.)

"I am a mortal enemy to arbitrary government and unlimited power." Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790), American inventor and US Founding Father, (in 'Words of the Founding Fathers', 2012).



In this day and age, with instant information, how does a politician succeed in double-talking, in bragging, in scapegoating and in shamefully distorting the truth, most of the time, without being unmasked as a charlatan and discredited? Why? That is the mysterious and enigmatic question that one may ask about U. S. President Donald Trump, as a politician.

The most obvious answer is the fact that Trump's one-issue and cult-like followers do not care what he does or says and whether or not he has declared a [war on truth and reality](#), provided he delivers the political and financial benefits they demand of him, based on their ideological or pecuniary interests. These groups of voters live in their own reality and only their personal interests count.

1- Four groups of one-issue voters behind Trump

There are four groups of [one-issue voters](#) to whom President Donald Trump has delivered the goodies:

- Christian religious right voters, whose main political issue is to fill the U. S. Supreme Court with ultra conservative judges. On that score, Donald Trump has been true to them by naming one such judge and in nominating a second one.
- Super rich Zionists and the Pro-Israel Lobby, whose obsession is the state of Israel. Again, on that score, President Donald Trump has fulfilled his promise to them and he has unilaterally moved the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, in addition to attacking the Palestinians and tearing up the 'Iran Deal'.
- The one-percent Income earners and some corporate owners, whose main demand to Trump was substantial tax cuts and deregulation. Once again, President Trump has fulfilled this group's wishes with huge tax cuts, mainly financed with future public debt increases, which are going to be paid for by all taxpayers.
- The NRA and the Pro-Gun Lobby, whose main obsession is to have the right to arm themselves to the teeth, including with military assault weapons, with as few strings attached as possible. Here again President Donald Trump has sided with them and against students who are increasingly in the line of fire in American schools.

With the strong support of these four monolithic lobbies—his electoral base—politician Donald Trump can count on the indefectible support of between 35 percent and 40 percent of the American electorate. It is ironic that some of Trump's other policies, like reducing health care coverage and the raising of import taxes, will hurt the poor and the middle class, even though some of Trump's victims can be considered members of the above lobbies.

Moreover, some of Trump's supporters regularly rely on [hypocrisy](#) and on excuses to exonerate their favorite but flawed politician of choice. If any other politician from a different party were to say and do half of what Donald Trump does and says, they would be asking for his impeachment.

There are three other reasons why Trump's rants, his [record-breaking lies](#), his untruths, his deceptions and his dictatorial-style attempts to [control information](#), in the eyes of his fanatical supporters, at least, are like water on the back of a duck. (— For the record, according to the [Washington Post](#), as of early August, President Trump has made some 4,229 false claims, which amount to 7.6 a day, since his inauguration.)

a- The first reason can be found in Trump's view that politics and even government business are first and foremost another form of [entertainment](#), i.e. a sort of TV reality show, which must be scripted and acted upon. Trump thinks that is [OK to lie](#) and to ask his assistants to [lie](#). In this new immoral world, the Trump phenomenon could be seen a sign of [post-democracy](#).

b- The second one can be found in Trump's artful and cunning tactics to unbalance and [manipulate the media](#) to increase his visibility to the general public and to turn them into his own tools of propaganda. When Trump attacks the media, he is in fact coaxing them to give him free coverage to spread his [insults](#), his fake accusations, his provocations, his constant [threats](#), his denials or reversals, his convenient [changes of subject](#) or his political spins. Indeed, with his outrageous statements, his gratuitous accusations and his attacks '*ad hominem*', and by constantly bullying and insulting adversaries at home and foreign heads of states abroad, and by issuing threats in repetition, right and left, Trump has forced the media to talk and journalists to write about him constantly, on a daily basis, 24/7.

That suits him perfectly well because he likes to be the center of attention. That is how he can change the political rhetoric when any negative issue gets too close to him. In the coming weeks and months, as the Special prosecutor [Robert Mueller's report](#) is likely to be released, Donald Trump is not above resorting to some sort of "[Wag the Dog](#)" political trickery, to change the topic and to possibly push the damaging report off the headlines.

In such a circumstance, it is not impossible that launching an illegal war of choice, say against Iran (a [pet project](#) of Trump's National Security Advisor John Bolton), could then look very convenient to a crafty politician like Donald Trump and to his warmonger advisors. Therefore, observers should be on the lookout to spot any development of the sort in the coming weeks.

That one man and his entourage could whimsically consider launching a [war of aggression](#) is a throwback to ancient times and is a sure indication of the level of depravity to which current politics has fallen. This should be a justified and clear [case for impeachment](#).

c- Finally, some far-right media outlets, such as [Fox News](#) and [Sinclair Broadcasting](#), have taken it upon themselves to systematically present Trump's lies and misrepresentations as some 'alternative' truths and facts.

Indeed, ever since 1987, when the Reagan administration abolished the [Fairness Doctrine](#) for licensing public radio and TV waves, and since a Republican dominated Congress passed the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which allowed for the [mass conglomeration of local broadcasting](#) in the United States, extreme conservative news outlets, such as the Fox and Sinclair networks, have sprung up. They are well financed, and they have essentially become powerful [political propaganda machines](#), erasing the line between facts and fiction, and regularly presenting fictitious alternative facts as the truth.

In so doing, they have pushed public debates in the United States away from facts, reason and logic, at least for those listeners and viewers for whom such outlets are the only source of information. It is not surprising that such far-right media have also made Donald Trump the champion of their cause, maliciously branding anything inconvenient as 'fake' news, as Trump has done in his own anti-media campaign and his sustained assault on the free press.

2- Show Politics and public affairs as a form of entertainment

Donald Trump does not seem to take politics and public affairs very seriously, at least when his own personal interests are involved. Therefore, when things go bad, he never volunteers to take personal responsibility, contrary to what a true leader would do, and he conveniently [shifts the blame](#) on somebody else. This is a sign of immaturity or cowardice. Paraphrasing President Harry Truman, “the buck never stops at his desk.”

Donald Trump essentially has the traits of a typical [showman diva](#), behaving in politics just as he did when he was the host of a TV show. Indeed, if one considers politics and public affairs as no more than a reality show, this means that they are really entertainment, and politicians are first and foremost entertainers or comedians.

3- Trump VS the media and the journalists

Donald Trump is the first U.S. president who rarely holds scheduled press conferences. Why would he, since he considers journalists to be his “enemies”! It doesn’t seem to matter to him that freedom of the press is guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution by the First Amendment. He prefers to rely on one-directional so-called ‘tweets’ to express unfiltered personal ideas and emotions (as if he were a private person), and to use them as his main public relations channel of communication.



The [ABC News network](#) has calculated that, as of last July, Trump has tweeted more than 3,500 times, slightly more than seven tweets a day. How could he have time left to do anything productive! Coincidentally, Donald Trump’s number of tweets is not far away from the number of outright lies and misleading claims that he has told and made since his inauguration. [The Washington Post](#) has counted no less than 3,251 lies or misleading claims of his, through the end of May of this year, —an average of 6.5 such misstatements per day of his presidency. Fun fact: Trump seems to accelerate the pace of his lies. Last year, he told 5.5 lies per day, on average. Is it possible to have a more cynical view of politics!

The media in general, (and [not only](#) American ones), then serve more or less voluntarily as so many resonance boxes for his daily ‘tweets’, most of which are often devoid of any thought and logic.

Such a practice has the consequence of demeaning the public discourse in the pursuit of the common good and the general welfare of the people to the level of a frivolous private enterprise, where expertise, research and competence can easily be replaced by improvisation, whimsical arbitrariness and charlatantry. In such a climate, only the short run counts, at the expense of planning for the long run.

Conclusion

All this leads to this conclusion: Trump's approach is not the way to run an efficient government. Notwithstanding the U.S. Constitution and what it says about the need to have "checks and balances" among different government branches, President Donald Trump has *de facto* pushed aside the U.S. Congress and the civil servants in important government Departments, even his own [Cabinet](#), whose formal meetings under Trump have been little more than photo-up happenings, to grab the central political stage for himself. If such a development does not represent an ominous threat to American democracy, what does?

The centralization of power in the hands of one man is bound to have serious political consequences, both for the current administration and for future ones.

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This article was originally published on the author's blog site:
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