

For COVID-19, as with everything else, Americans on the right and left live in different universes when it comes to trusting the media | Nieman Journalism Lab

By Joshua Benton

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There are certain kinds of news stories that are really just iterations of an [Ur-text](#), the defining statement about human existence that underlines a million variant tales. For instance, how many environmental stories do you read that are versions of *Human activity is warming the earth's atmosphere and damaging countless natural processes*? Or how many political stories that all come down to *Donald Trump lacks the standard human shame that limits how much people lie in public and obvious ways*? There's more news breaking every day — but at its core, it's all just variations on a theme.

In the Nieman Lab universe, one of the core Ur-texts — alongside *You're probably going to need a paywall to survive*, *Information inequality is increasing*, and *There aren't enough philanthropists to pay for all of local news* — is *Perceptions of the news media in the United States are radically and increasingly polarized by ideology*. We've written about a gazillion studies, reports, and papers that reach a version of that conclusion. And here's another one, with an international twist.

[...]

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