

# Just how broken is our political information ecosystem, anyway? | Nieman Journalism Lab

By Joshua Benton

December 1, 2020

We're in a period of political transition here in the United States, with the incoming Biden administration subject to the usual allotment of lobbying, questioning, and badgering — from interest groups, from industries, and from the media. “How will Biden’s new team treat the press?” CJR’s Jon Allsop asks. Can America again be a beacon of press freedom to the world? asks the Committee to Protect Journalists.

But all those questions depend on an underlying fact: that we really are in a period of political transition, and not merely in a temporary lull in National Donaldness — one that will end with the start of a second Trump term Jan. 20, once the kraken is finally released from what must be a truly bewildering and labyrinthine series of interlocking cages.

It’s become cliché to note that Democrats and Republicans live in different information universes, in large part as the result of conservative media lending credibility to conspiratorial ideas and viewing all things political through an oppositional lens. But how bad is the divide, anyway? We have some new data on that question, via Bright Line Watch, a collaboration of political science researchers interested in tracking the strength and/or weakness of American democracy in realtime. (Emily Badger also wrote up their findings for The New York Times.)

[...]

Source: [Just how broken is our political information ecosystem, anyway? » Nieman Journalism Lab](#)