Footnotes on Figures of Suppression

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[1]This paper is the first footnote in the series Footnotes on the Figures of Suppression – It proves that Journalism on the Assange case, in the Swedish nation-wide press, is propaganda. Published Online 2020-08-11

The Police Accusations against Mr. Julian Assange

Journalism is conceptualized in terms of accounting, and explored in probabilistic terms. The predictions of the Propaganda Model (PM) are scrutinized with a battery of recognised tests. This paper proves that journalism on the Assange case in the Swedish nation-wide press is propaganda. The hypothesis of pre-emptive openness, i.e. less or equal than 10 % deviations from strict obedience to the elite opinion, is *accepted*. This paper employs a comprehensive dataset of 2362 news items 2010-2016 from the largest Swedish outlets. Parametric estimation of random samples suggest an overall concentration of departures around 3 % from the predictions of the PM – without significant improvement over time. Non-parametric simulations point to a concentration about 1.4%. The hypotheses derived from the PM under pre-emptive openness, could not be rejected on the key issues of the case. Furthermore, many facts which have been systematically misrepresented in the press are made accessible.

Introduction

WikiLeaks defies the hierarchical order of concentrated ownership and control. Its financial sustainability is ultimately granted by contributions from its readers, not by selling its audience to advertisers. Among its sources are the experts, who courageously defied powerful interests within the government or the business community. This organization's commitment to inform the public transcends the ideological boundaries of traditional media outlets. This unconstrained organizational form has made the inner workings of power transparent to the public eye, by publishing millions of documents, with an unparalleled, flawless track record.

The organizational underpinnings of WikiLeaks may thus be identified, by negating all the constraints imposed on the traditional press in democratic societies according to the Propaganda Model (Herman & Chomsky, 2002). Considering that the Propaganda Model[2] (PM) is one of the most successful theories in the social sciences, the way societies react to such an anomaly is revealing about the nature of the constraints which underlie institutions, and shape human interaction. What happens when a new formidable force acts outside these constraints tells us something crucial about the potential for change in democratic societies. We can learn about how societies hold together when someone challenges authority by writing his or her own script. The fate of the architect of this anomaly is indicative of how our personal freedom fits the design of power.

The UN ruled that Mr. Julian Assange was arbitrary detained in 2015, hence Sweden and the UK were deemed to be engaged in human rights abuses. Similar conclusions from prominent professionals have been publicly stated since. The perhaps most notable is from UN Law-Professor Nils Melzer, who reported that several countries have engaged in a collective effort against Mr. Julian Assange which amounts to "psychological torture". He attributes part of this abuse, to the 'endless stream of humiliating, debasing and threatening statements in the press and on social media', according to OHCHR (2019-05-31). The professor's absence in the media was deplored by Clinical Psychologist Dr. Lissa Johnson (2019-06-15). She attributes the silence surrounding ongoing human rights abuses against Mr. Julian Assange, to a persistent bystander syndrome induced by the presence of power and authority. Psychosocial conditions at the democratic core are deemed suffocating to the extent Dr. Johnsson perceives a press-freedom event in the UK close to an 'Orwellian nightmare', and overall analogous to Milgram's classical experimental setup.

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[2] Henceforth, 'the PM' refers specifically to Chomsky & Herman (2002), whereas 'a PM' refers to models with the same prediction but with a variety of similar assumptions.

To begin with, keywords such as Milgram, torture, the press, 'collective persecution' and Sweden, are in stark contrast with recurrent surveys about Swedish socio-political conditions. Discrepancies which provoke questions touching on the foundations of the social sciences. Countries like the US, UK, and Sweden, are usually top-ranked in democratic performance.

Although metrics of culture at the national level are contested (Matei & Abrudan, 2018), the measures in the World Values Survey - individualism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity – are frequently used (Niranjam et.al. 2013). Remarkably low tolerance for unequal distribution of power, low uncertainty avoidance, and a high degree of individualism, are found to be widely held 'Swedish' values. Sweden is an outlier in the Inglehart-Welzel scale, with high scores on 'secular-rational' and 'Self-expression' values. This is interpreted as a desire for participation in decision-making, with little emphasis on authority (see e.g. Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Wikipedia). This unique combination could work as an antidote against subservient journalism. Furthermore, Sweden holds the prominent third place in the World Press Freedom index which measures pluralism, independence vis-à-vis sources of power, self-sufficiency, self-censorship, abuses, legal framework, infrastructure and transparency (RWB, 2019). These factors makes the Swedish press a formidable test for radical media theories such as the PM.

The greater conundrum is that if prominent democracies fail to respect basic human rights and maintain a free press, then either these countries have been grossly misjudged in relation to others or the really existing democracies are substandard, with individualism as a mirage.

Even if random samples on the overall dataset in principle is enough to test some of the important implications of a PM, such aggregated information may still not suffice to rule out that scarce information on key issues, may be mostly accurate. These concerns can be succinctly expressed in terms of propaganda accounting. Forthcoming Footnotes will consider related problems in more detail (See also Echeverría, 2013a; 2018).

Propaganda Accounting

At an aggregate level, there is a set of global predictions. A comprehensive partition into topics from a set of outlets, immediately yields an expression for the totality of journalism

(1)

$$Journalism_k = \sum_{i \in Topics} items_i,$$

or

$$Journalism = \sum_{i \in G} \sum_{j \in T} items_{ij}$$

Where k either is a region, e.g. a country, or a specific outlet. In the latter case, the totality of journalism is the double sum over outlets (G) and topics (T). A first set of comparisons between regions or outlets with different orientations can be carried out to detect disparities in the topics 'in print', or proportions, i.e. the shares of each topic of total output. This can also e.g. be measured in the number of words. Once these items are partitioned in those conforming to the elite opinion or not, it is possible to test a PM with some requirement that the number of items of the former is greater than the latter, denoted as **(i)** $\#E > \#\neg E$.

Moving on to the next level, consider a subset of journalism which can be understood in terms of true or false and pro- or anti-elite or neutral. Clearly, as in the aggregate case, it could also contain items which are neither true nor false (denoted as $\square$), and represented with unlabelled dots in figure 1 below.

(2) {True, False, $\square$}x{Elite,$\neg$Elite, Neutral} =
{{T,E},{T,$\neg$E},{F,E},{F,$\neg$E},},{T,N},{F,N},{$\square$,E},{$\square$,$\neg$E},{$\square$,N}}
= {S$_1$,S$_2$,S$_3$,S$_4$,S$_5$,S$_6$,S$_7$,S$_8$,S$_9$} = Ω.

The top triangle consists of true items, the bottom false. The left-hand side are items in support of the elite view, the right-hand items challenge the elite stance. {E, ⌐E} could be relabelled and understood as mutually exclusive points of view, more specifically political views, in particular for or against elite opinion. In the same manner, emphasis on distortions instead of True-False is reasonable. The vertices represent the set of states.

F1. Nine States of Political Orientation and Truth Value
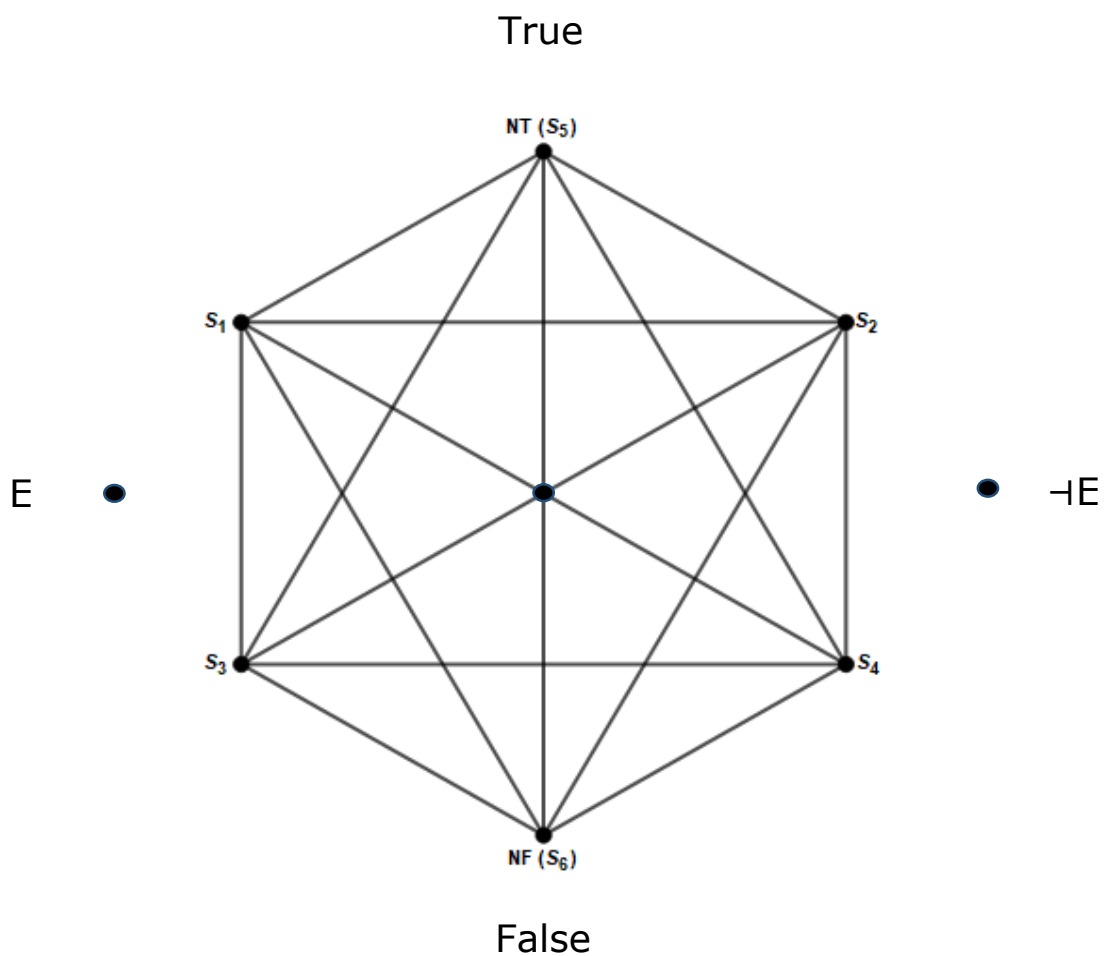
A natural point of departure is to study pairs. For example, Kahan et al. (2017) set out to test two fundamentally comprehensive and opposed stances which may explain the phenomenon of 'persistent controversy over policy-relevant facts'. One is called Science Comprehension Thesis (SCT),

the other Identity-Protective Cognition Thesis. As the names suggest, the SCT is attributes bias to cognitive limitations regarding the understanding of a given issue, whereas the ICT suggests a general disposition among human beings to avoid alienation from the group due to divergent opinions. Although their treatment concerns gun laws specifically, the psychological mechanisms at work are more general and applicable to other topics. Their carefully crafted experiment could reject the SCT, whereas evidence was consistent with the ICT. In essence, the propensity to successfully solve a mathematical problem is influenced by political considerations. A match between a person's political convictions, and the political meaning of the correct solution, increases the probability of correct answer. Mismatch lowers the probability of a correct answer, and the effect is larger for the more skilled group when the problem is challenging to the subjects. Therefore, when groups with divergent political orientation exist, there will be a polarization in terms of which answer is regarded as correct, in spite of the facts at hand. This experiment, is thus an inquiry which is relevant for journalists, and can be understood as the diametrical opposed interactions represented as the links S_1S_4, S_2S_3, and S_5S_6 (control).

One could study paths from one state to another over time, i.e. transitions. Links to neutrality could e.g. be shifts to trivia. Analysis of US foreign policy, and comparative studies of countries which are friends or foes of the empire may contain S_1S_2, and so forth. However, it is possible to make feasible estimates of the proportions through random samples without postulating transition probabilities. As a matter of accounting, the reports (R) of these states by different groups can be described as:

(3)

$$R = \bigcup_{i \in G, j \in S} R_i \cap S_j = \left[\bigcup_{i \in G, j \in E} R_i \cap S_j \right] \cup \left[\bigcup_{i \in G, j \in \neg E} R_i \cap S_j \right] \cup \left[\bigcup_{i \in G, j \in N} R_i \cap S_j \right] =$$

$$= E \cup \neg E \cup N$$

Thus if there are two groups G={M,D} (M=1 and D=2), which are identical except their motivation for pro- or anti-elite journalism (E or $\dashv$ E), and are faced with complex polarizing data which is either true or false, corresponding to S_1S_4 and S_2S_3 or neutral topics S_5S_6. Then by definition, the number of reports (#R) can be decomposed in the following manner:

(4)

$$\#R \equiv R = \#\{E \cup \dashv E \cup N\} = R_M + R_D = E + \dashv E + N = \sum_{i=1}^{2}[E_i + \dashv E_i + N_i]$$

Denoting the number $\#\{R_i \cap S_j\} \equiv R_iS_j$, and assuming that group one is pro-, and group two anti-elite, the ICT can be understood in terms of the following constraints:

(5)

$$R_MS_1 > R_MS_4, and\ R_DS_2 > R_DS_3$$

With the opposite inequalities when R_i are swapped because their motivations are diametrically opposed. Thus, *ceteris paribus*, with the same *intensity* of ideological bias and *output*, the differences between the former and the latter group are the same (including R_iS_7 and R_iS_8). Therefore:

(6) $R_MS_1 + R_DS_1 + R_MS_3 + R_DS_3 = R_MS_2 + R_DS_2 + R_MS_4 + R_DS_4 \underset{\text{by def.}}{\Longleftrightarrow} \textbf{(ii)}\ E = \dashv E$

This polarization result **(ii)**, is contrary to the PM prediction **(i)** $E > \dashv E$.

Before engaging a probabilistic formulations, it is instructive to consider the following simple model. For purpose of exposition, the aforementioned assumptions are maintained, except the share of output from each group. Abstracting from idiosyncratic marginal productivity assumptions, the perhaps most straightforward way to reconcile the conflicting results (i & ii), is to consider employers who engage in hands-on macro management. By controlling the proportions (α) of each group in the workforce (W), the media outlets effectively control the share reported by each group.

(7)

$$w_M + w_D = W = \frac{R}{k}, and \; \alpha W = w_M \rightarrow \alpha W k + (1 - \alpha)W k = k(w_M + w_D) =$$

$$= R_M + R_D = \sum_{i=1}^{9} R_M S_i + \sum_{i=1}^{9} R_D S_i$$

Clearly, when $\alpha \approx 1$, then the mainstream pro-elite group (M) will dominate the workforce. The pro-elite bias is maximized when $\alpha = 1$, because, the marginal product of elite opinion output, is strictly greater for the pro-elite group as implied by eq. 5. By definition, the bias is only balanced when the groups are of equal size, as their differences exactly offset each other (eq.6), i.e. both groups are equally productive in terms of total output (e.g. text mass). Conversely when $\alpha \approx 0$, the anti-elite group and anti-establishment journalism will dominate. A result like (ii) is effectively derived by assuming $w_1 \approx w_2$, i.e. $\alpha \approx \frac{1}{2}$.

In order to examine further problems of propaganda management, consider a scenario when neutral staff also is employed. This can be thought of as an inconvenience because it may for instance be difficult to discriminate at the time of contracting or e.g. management wants safeguard reputation by reducing the level of partisan-induced fake news, and so forth.

However, truly neutral workers will not make systematic errors on partisan issues, nor will they discriminate topics, which would be incompatible with more demanding requirements on (i), as suggested by data. More generally, some issues can be assumed to be of strategic interest, and written with certain requirements concerning certain political bias or technical qualities such as adherence to facts. Furthermore, there is a set of circumstances affecting the realised quality and quantity of output which must be taken into account, such as the degree of freedom of the workforce, obstacles against political discrimination prior to hiring, abstraction from productivity and ability differences etc.

Now, consider individuals who can be categorised in H number of groups h_i. Each group writes α_i number of items, which yields $\alpha_i h_i = n_i$ articles in total for each group. In accordance with eq. 1, these items are in turn distinguished by topics, which may be categorized arbitrarily.

(8)

$$R = \sum_{j \in S} n_j = \sum_{i \in G} \alpha_i h_i = \sum_{i \in G} \sum_{j \in S} n_{ij} = \sum_{i \in G} \sum_{j \in S} \alpha_{ij} h_i$$

Clearly, who is hired and what those hired are allowed to write will determine the composition of output, given that the groups differ in how they write about certain topics. It is thus possible to deduce the relatively importance of the components, given information about aforementioned circumstances. Assume there is an important set of topics Γ, and less controversial topics Λ. Even if directives about what should be written is unfeasible, it may still be possible to control outcomes with a heterogeneous workforce. This scenario can be explored by setting $h_i = h$, which implies $R = h \sum_{i \in G} \sum_{j \in S} \alpha_{ij}$.

If there is mainstream (M), a dissident group (D), and a neutral one, then the predictions of a propaganda model require that $\sum_{j \in \Gamma} \alpha_{Mj} > \sum_{i \neq M} \sum_{j \in \Gamma} \alpha_{ij}$. In view of eq.2, managers could identify the topics of strategic interest for the

elite opinion $\Gamma = \{S_i | S_i \cap (E \cup \dashv E) \neq \emptyset\}$ and let the pro-elite staff work with these, e.g. $S_\Gamma = \{S_1, S_2, S_3, S_4, S_7, S_8\}$, and the rest $S_\emptyset \equiv \{S_5, S_6, S_9\}$. In particular:

(9)

$$\frac{R}{h} = \sum_{j \in \Gamma} \alpha_{Mj} + \sum_{j \in \Lambda} (\alpha_{Dj} + \alpha_{Nj})$$

Such arrangement limits the work on the fabric of elite discourse to labourers who are inclined to champion the views of their superiors. This corresponds to a case where e.g. those deemed irresponsible are free to express their partisan views about identity politics in sport or fashion, whereas those deemed responsible are allowed to do think pieces about foreign policy. A more institutional approach is to emphasize that journalists will themselves accommodate willingly due to various pressures. Self-censorship can be expressed in a similar fashion.

Several of the filters of a PM can be discussed in this laconic setting. In particular, due to the bias in flak, errors which favour elite opinion will receive less flak than errors against elite opinion. Similarly, truths in favour of elite opinion will be less prone to scrutiny than truths against. Therefore, to avoid destructive criticism, journalists must also obey the following conditions:

(10) $\quad R_i S_3 > R_i S_4$ and $R_i S_1 > R_i S_2$ and $R_i S_7 > R_i S_8$

Only pro-elite are naturally inclined to satisfy these requirements among the partisan journalists. Worker insecurity, competition, and cost savings will tend to increase the likelihood of firing those that make mistakes deemed more inconvenient than others. A list of coping strategies can be invoked to emphasize freedom of choice of the individual. Long-run effects on the mentality of the workforce are worthwhile to reflect on.

Basically Likely

Probabilistic formulations facilitate the articulation of testable hypotheses and are suitable to carry out thought experiments from a different angle than the ones pursued so far. For purpose of exposition, it is convenient to consider three distinct types of journalists as a benchmark.

Ideally, journalists are motivated by truth, have a mind of their own, and all the tools at their disposal to form independent and educated opinions about the state of affairs. Such intellectuals will constantly work to investigate, critique, and re-evaluate their own point of view and those of others, without conforming to pressure from peers or their superiors. These intellectuals would then be hired by meritocratic media outlets sworn to defend democracy. In such a state of the world, falsehoods are the result of errors due to unfortunate circumstances which may be related to the SCT, bad luck or occasional slip in moral rigour. This type is called *Guardians*, and is given a 90% chance of performing an accurate piece of journalism regardless of topic.

Such conditions would make systematic bias in accordance with a PM or ICT unlikely. These conditions would also make the life of a theorist quite uneventful and easy. Such theorist would be forced to reject the PM and admit that journalism is mostly accurate in the long run but is nevertheless known to display temporary departures from truth, for instance while complex events unravel or due to pure chance.

Most of the time, it would thus be reasonable to propose that journalism could be seen as the result of independent professional sharp shooters taking aim on a target without letting themselves be influence by the noise of neighbouring colleagues. Professionalism and meritocracy would furthermore ensure that accuracy would not vary drastically among journalists. Such journalism is referred to as *accurate*.

The opposite case is when media is neither telling the truth nor unbiased. In such state of the world, truthful reports are either errors or emerge due to other extraneous considerations vis-à-vis the official mission of the press, such as tactical or strategic concerns. One way of thinking about this is that media functions in a manner consistent with a propaganda model, but the idiosyncratic Swedish conditions force the press to make concessions. One important factor is the prevalence of people with intensive political preferences, who are aware of media bias, and difficult to exclude. Such individuals may protest if their point of view is discarded, whereby media would risk to concede fundamental self-criticism. The reformed Communist Party in the Swedish parliament could be thought of as a proxy for people who may raise valid concerns if they become underrepresented in the media. This party represents roughly 5-10 % of the population. Therefore, as a first conjecture, it was postulated that 5-10 % of the articles are truthful or do not conform to dogma in favour of the elite opinion. In this paper [0%, 10%] is subsequently referred to as pre-emptive openness, i.e. 90% in favour of the elite opinion. Such journalism is called *mainstream*, and the associated journalist is referred to as *Obedient*.

Chancie has 50% chance to write a truthful or divergent piece, dependent on the setting. Associated journalism is called *pseudo-neutral* to emphasize that it is indeed quite false or biased.

For sequences of journalism consisting of links over Ω, most of the aforementioned is captured with the following parsimonious model:

(11)

$$J = \sum_{j \in G} \sum_{i \in \Delta} T_{ij} \, , T_{ij} \in \text{Bin}(n_{ij}, p_{ij}), \forall \, i \in \Delta = \{S_j S_k \mid S_j S_k \in \Xi_\omega\}, j \in G, \sum_{j \in G} \alpha_{ij} = A_i \forall \, i \in \Delta$$

T_{ij} is a function which depends on distributions of journalists and topics. Its score can e.g. represent the number of items aligned with truth or political values in a Ω-graph of orientations Ξ_ω. A correct item is one true to the

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facts available at the time. Items are written by journalist of type j in G, which is a set of groups with various characteristics which affect accuracy. A_i denotes the total number of items of each type, written by journalists from each group. In view of eq. 1, it is possible to study the relative shares of different topics over Ω at the aggregate or focus on a smaller set of topics motivated by theory. In general, there could be arbitrary dependencies between each link in Ξ_ω. If these were known, it would be possible make additional inferences about the proportions of journalism.

As a point of departure, experimental data allows for a study of the links S_1S_4, S_2S_3, and S_5S_6. In particular, x is the number of correct items when the correct facts are in the interest of the elite; y is the number of incorrect items when facts are against the interest of the elite; and z is the corresponding number when facts are not politically charged.

(12)

$$J = \sum_{j \in G} \left[T_{xj} + T_{yj} + T_{zj} \right], T_{ij} \in \text{Bin}\left(\alpha_{ij}, p_{ij} \right)$$

Like in ordinary accounting, the previous approach allows for the formation of different ratios which are informative about the character of journalism. The share of pro-elite items or the share of neutral items are informative about the character of journalism. Now it is possible to make hypotheses of the likelihood of certain range of proportions, e.g. test if $\frac{x+y}{N_x+N_y} \geq \tau_{PM}$ or theorize about $\alpha_x = \frac{x}{N_x+N_y+N_z}$ etc. A particularly harsh version would require that $P\left[\frac{T_x+T_y}{N_x+N_y} \geq \frac{9}{10} \right] \geq \beta$ is * significant. It is possible to deduce[3] how accuracy varies with proxies for ability from Kahan (2017). These figures will be briefly discussed later on as they provide a point of reference and aid thought experiments with added realism.

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[3] Unfortunately, their logistic regression seems to imply a narrower gap which is tilted to the right of their subsequent simulations by a great deal. The figures discussed in this series are inferred from the weighted regression lines (Kahan et al. 2017, p.11).

The Swedish elite opinion

Assange's defiance goes against all constraints of the PM. Theory suggests that even slight departures from the elite opinion may be met with flak. However, the scope and quality of WikiLeaks' work made this organisation virtually impossible to ignore and hard to criticise. Hence, from theoretical considerations alone, the expectation is that the Swedish police allegations were used to marginalise Assange, WikiLeaks and their work. This study follows the chronology of the legal case and zooms in on key events about which departures from the elite opinion could be measured. This effort requires that (a) an elite opinion about the event could be inferred, and (b) enough coverage to test hypotheses derived from a PM. The methodological rationale for this is simple.

The actions and statements of important branches of the Swedish state left a record from which it is possible to infer their stance on the Assange case. Furthermore, the elite opinion is expressed in various public statements. Media is generous with public statements from government officials and other experts who articulated the elite view in defence of the state line. US pressure can be directly traced to statements from the military. Moreover, as Maurizi (2015) showed, investigative journalists revealed that the Crown Prosecutor Service exerted pressure on its Swedish counterpart.

US efforts against WikiLeaks are well-documented[4] and extensive, including the initiation of a tailor made special unit under the command of General Robert Carr. The day before Assange arrived to Sweden, the Obama administration encouraged its allies to limit his freedom of movement and start a criminal investigation against him. Three days later, a financial blockade was launched against WikiLeaks which depleted Assanges liquidity. Assange currently risks 175 years in prison if extradited to the US.

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[4] Reliable data on this is topic abundant to the extent that it is not worthwhile to review it. Some attacks have even reached the mainstream press, Sweden included. For reference see e.g. John Pilger's articles or documentation provided by his legal advisors. The affidavit of Assange (2013) provides a good list of references of the threats at the time.

Sweden's close ties to the US include intelligence cooperation which deepened in WWII (see e.g. Agrell, 2016). The intelligence-Analysis Professor Wilhem Agrell acknowledged that Swedish Military Intelligence (MUST) most likely was concerned about the Afghanistan Leaks which contained information about some of the core work of Swedish elite forces. Military sources described the leaks as a 'bomb', in the Swedish press. (Ölander & Sandberg, July 2010). Like in the US, MUST declared that WikiLeaks was a threat to Swedish troops. About the same time, the Swedish Intelligence Service (SÄPO), claimed that intelligence cooperation with the US was threatened in the event Sweden agreed to shelter WikiLeaks' servers on its soil. (Assange, 2013; Thorsell, 2015).

Moving on to the civil branches of the state, the initial intentions of the police and the Prosecutor Authority was publicly announced trough a leak to the press, in the award-winning scoop the 21st of August 2010 (Salihu et al., 2010). Most of the allegations were however dropped within days. The official stance of the Swedish Prosecutor Authority is cemented the following week when, Director of Public Prosecutions Marianne Ny, chose to reinitiate the preliminary investigation on September the 1st.

In summary, the Swedish elite consensus excludes political explanations to the many irregularities surrounding the process against Mr. Assange. The Government of Sweden consistently defended inaction of the Prosecutor, i.e. her refusal to hear Assange in London, which decisively contributed to the arbitrary detention, according to the UN. The Swedish Prosecutor Authority denied political pressure, in contradiction with evidence. Pressure was attributed to politicians who questioned the course of inaction after several years (TT, 2014-02-03; 2014-02-04). Politicians did not express their views about the case in opinion pieces. The law profession restricted its critique to technical aspects of the process, and raised some concerns about breaches of standard procedure. However, even those who were portrayed as critics usually distanced themselves from statements about human rights abuses and political aspects.

The political explanation from the ranks of the Swedish experts which received most attention, was that Sweden's course of action could be attributed to feminism. Substantial departures from consensus in opinion pieces are singular. (see also Echeverría 2018, p.181-213)

Homogeneity of the Swedish Nation-Wide Press

How many articles stay within the parameters of elite opinion? This question can be answered by asking how many deviate from the parameters given by the establishment. Media behaviour was postulated to serve the elite opinion by adopting the following characteristics:

1) Julian Assange and WikiLeaks are marginalized with attacks on their credibility. This is carried out through personal attacks, questioning of motives, misrepresentation of statements etc.

2) Facts and authoritative discussions that speak of a politically motivated process are excluded or discredited.

3) The arbitrary detention of Assange, in conflict with international conventions on human rights, is ignored or denied. The official state line that Assange resides in the embassy by his own free will dominates the press.

4) Journalism stays within elite consensus and changes in journalism follow the tactical variation within elite opinion. Journalism adapts to the official stance to arbitrarily detain Julian Assange after it has been crystalized. Changes to Assange's advantage challenging the tactical variation within elite opinion may happen after up to several years of docility within the permissible range of opinion.[5]

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[5] In addition, a fifth speculative hypothesis was considered: *Information in accordance with elite opinion to Assange's disadvantage is expressed by impartial agents or through confessions. On the contrary, systemic critique to Assange's advantage is expressed by partial actors*. Surprisingly enough, data is consistent with this rather extreme implication. However, caution is warranted as this result is preliminary. It is a first attempt to account for credibility asymmetries. (see Echeverría, 2018, p.147-166, p.312-315,417-420).

1729 items exist 2011-2016[6], 210 are drawn randomly from these, 35 each year. Seven articles defied any of the aforementioned hypotheses – if a benevolent interpretation against the thesis of this paper is made. Only three if a more reasonable judgement is exercised. The items were mainly trivia, attacks on Assange, political assertions or just stayed within the narrow spaces dictated by establishment opinion. The number of deviant articles each year, X_t, can be seen as observations from the Hyper-Geometrical Distribution, i.e. $X_t \in Hyp(N_t,35,n_{success})$. The theoretical share of deviant items in the sample is $P = n_{success}/N_t$, and thus $X_t \in Hyp(35,p)$ is a valid convention. P* is the least square estimate.

T1. Pre-emptive Openness and its Upper Bound 2011-2016

Year	N_t	n_{obs}	p = 10 %
2011	461	1	11.3%
2012	547	1	11.2%
2013	248	0	1.7%
2014	152	1	9.6%
2015	138	0	1.3%
2016	183	4	75.7%
Total	1729	58	59.2%*

Total with estimate P= 7/210 ≈ 3%

Employing the least squares estimate (≈3%) with Normal approximation[7] of $X_t \in Hyp(1729,210,p)$, the 99% confidence interval is [0.6%, 6%]. The upper bound for a 99.9% confidence interval is 6.9%.

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[6] 2362 2010-2011. t_0 is chosen to account for the formation of an elite opinion after the allegations, in particular when Ny signaled the official stance.
[7] When data is abundant, particular distributions are not necessary in order to carry out statistical inference. E.g. binomial and related distributions can be approximated with the Normal or Poisson distribution when certain criteria are met. This approximation turns out to be consistent with exact calculations, and serves as a point of reference.

Hypothetically speaking, a parameter of roughly 6 %, i.e. p=103/1729, is the largest conceivable concentration of divergent articles which cannot be rejected with * significance, when considering the whole period *with an exact method*. 3% is associated with 59.2% likelihood. A 10% concentration of divergent items has merely a 0.1% likelihood.

However, the data does not quite fulfil the requisite for Normal or Poisson approximation. Therefore, non-parametric Bootstrap of one million simulations is employed[8].

T2. Non-Parametric Bootstrap

Point Estimate	[95% Conf. Interval]
P = 0.01429	[0.01422, 0.01436]
Simulations	[99.9% Conf. Interval]
n = 1×10^6	[0.01417, 0.01441]

Clearly, pre-emptive openness cannot be rejected. It is noteworthy that the Bootstrap estimate is at the lower end of the 99.9 % confidence interval resulting from a Normal approximation. The question in this paper is if the predictions from a propaganda model should be *accepted*. To answer this question, note that as a matter of accounting, the items under consideration are either within or outside the elite opinion. Therefore, the procedure narrows down to a sharp test.

Hence, the hypothesis **H0:** *Pre-emptive openness is true* against the alternative **H1:** *Heterogeneity is greater than Pre-emptive openness*, can be tested in the following manner: *If x > a, then reject H0* or *If x ≤ a, then 'accept' H0*. The power of this test increases most conveniently.
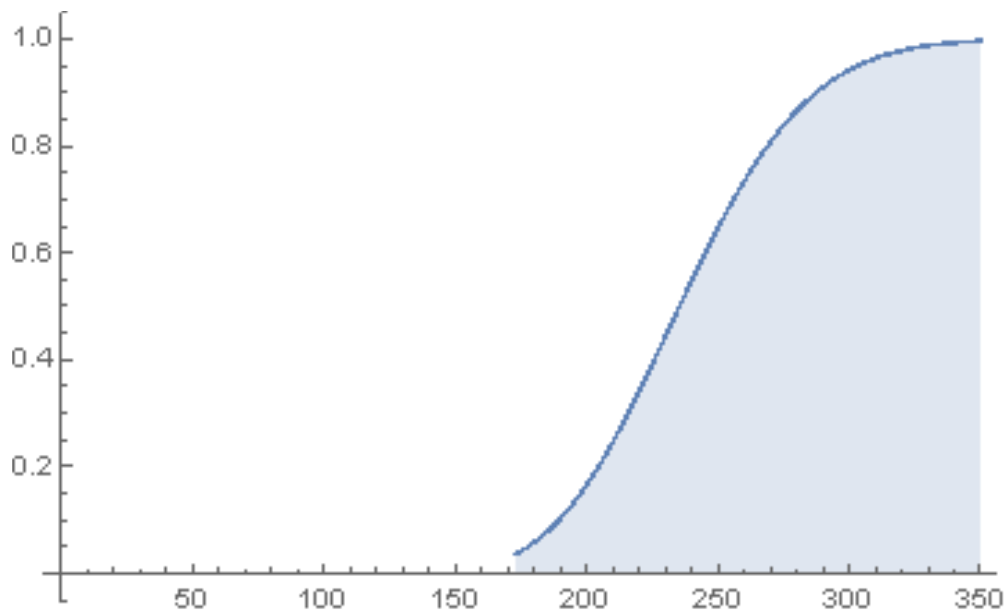
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[8] The intervals are open, in spite of the graphics.

F2.Probability Rejecting H0 when true in (a,n$_{succ.}$)-space
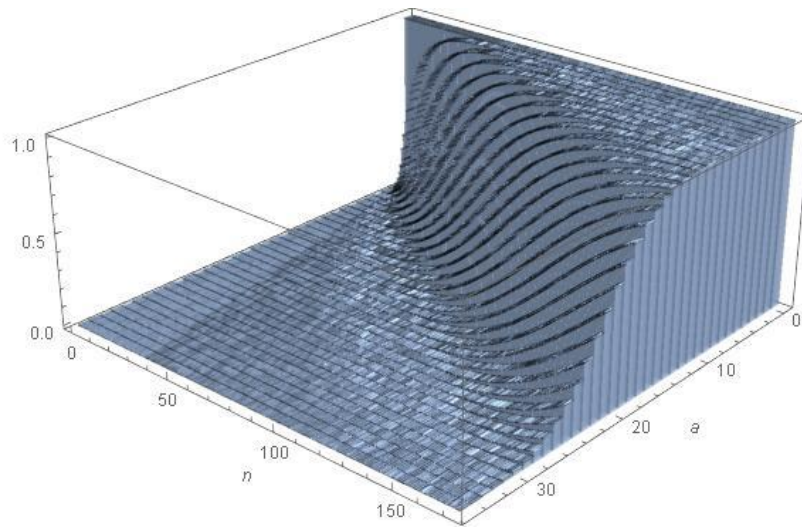
The probability of rejecting is monotonous in the (a, n$_{succ.}$)-space. The power function φ(p)=P(H0 rejected | p=10% is the true value)= α has a value of 3.69% when a=29, and α=0.009 when a=35.

F3. The Power Function φ(p) for α=0.05

At the * level, i.e. when a=29, the probability of erroneously *accepting* H0 when heterogeneity is greater than pre-emptive openness (i.e. rejecting H1 when H1 is true), is less than 20 % when p=15.6 %, and drops below 5% already when p=17.6%. Similarly, when requiring ** significance, the probability of a type 2 error drops below 5% when p=21.6%, and is ** when p=23% ($\varphi(0.23)=0.99$, $n_{success}=400$).

The results are similar when each year is checked for the upper bound of pre-emptive openness, i.e. 10% deviant items. The figures suggest that a homogeneity of 90% in service of the elite opinion, may be an understatement. Indeed, for the years 2013, and 2015, the true value of divergence is likely closer to the lower end of $p \in [5\%,10\%]$.

Furthermore, χ^2 tests cannot reject the null of homogeneity across each year (9.5, d.f=5), i.e. that $p_{2011}=p_{2012}=..=p_{2016}$. In other words, chance as an explanation for an increase in divergent items over time, cannot be ruled out for the period 2011-2016 at * significance. This result highlights that the tests presented below, do not exaggerate the bias. On the contrary, the figures underscore that the experiments are rigged against the thesis of a propagandistic press.

The overall picture clearly suggests that little of value in support of Assange or against the elite opinion has been written. Data is for instance consistent with a scenario where the profit motive favours e.g. paparazzi-styled trivia over important topics. To get a grip of the virtually impossible prospect of accurate and critical journalism, consider the following table below. It shows the likelihood of *Mainstream Pundit (90% elite)*, *Pseudo-Neutral (50% elite)* and *Accurate Contrarian (90% anti elite)* journalistic culture. In addition to truthfulness, these cultures also encompass opinions which may either support or challenge it, such that corresponding shares like $\frac{x}{N_x+N_y+N_z}$ (accounting for opinions) are computable.

T.3 Likelihood of Three Distinct Journalist Cultures Defined by Share of Divergent Items

Year	Mainstream Pundit (10%)	Pseudo-Neutral (50%)	Accurate Contrarian (90%)
2011	0.11	3.27×10^{-10}	3.70×10^{-40}
2012	0.11	3.50×10^{-10}	1.93×10^{-38}
2013	0.018	1.77×10^{-12}	0
2014	0.96	1.10×10^{-11}	0
2015	0.013	8.30×10^{-14}	0
2016	0.76	$1.31 * 10^{-7}$	0
Overall	0.00010*	7.68×10^{-57}	0**

*p=1% has a 99% & p=3% a 70% likelihood.

** Rounded to 0 with machine accuracy of 323 digits

The risk of getting hit by lightning a given year is in the magnitude 10^{-6}. NASA estimates the lifetime probability of getting hit by space debris to roughly 4.5×10^{-14} for a particular individual (Wolchover, 2011). If a person who travels to Proxima Centauri, is given a fortune corresponding to the full distance to his destination per meter (10^{18} \$/m), with the probability of the Planck Length[9] (10^{-35}) at arrival and zero otherwise, then the expected value of completing the voyage is \$10. In conclusion, the study undertaken in Echeverría (2018) is too harsh against Mr. Assange, and biased in favour of the Swedish nation-wide press. The postulated 90-95% homogeneity in favour of the elite opinion may be an understatement. Likewise, the observed signs of improvement in reporting may be due to chance. Pre-emptive openness is *accepted* – distinguishable from a mere failure to reject it. The results are reliable as the power of the test increases rapidly, which makes it possible to beat observational equivalence in the space of theories, with hypotheses that only differ a few percentage points.

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[9] Wikipedia asserts that according to string theory, lengths below this scale (10^{-33}cm) 'do not make physical sense'.

POLICE ACCUSATIONS

As a matter of undisputable fact, the police initiated the legal process against Mr. Julian Assange[10]. Unfortunately for him, the investigation was against all recommendations and Swedish legal praxis, immediately made public by on-duty Prosecutor Maria Kjellstrand. Mr. Assange became aware of the allegations[11] only after he had become one of the most famous criminal suspects in the world. The on-duty prosecutor clearly stated that the **police reported Assange**, and initiated an investigation which remained at the preliminary stage for almost a decade – **not the women**.

The data[12] is heavily skewed towards a storytelling which erroneously states that it was the women who reported Mr. Julian Assange for sexual offences. The hypothesis of unbiased and truthful coverage can therefore be discarded, already at a first glance.

T.4 Media's Narrative on who made the Police Report

Who Reported	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
The Women	78	91.76	91.76
The Police	7	8.24	100.00
Total	85	100.00	

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[10] 'On 20th August 2010 SW went to the police to seek advice. AA accompanied her for support. The police treated their visit as the filing of formal reports for rape of SW and molestation of AA' (Supreme Court, 2011)
[11] Witness statement Alhem (2011); and The scoop by Diamant Salihu et al. (2010-08-21)

[12] Printed Items about the police report are comprehensively covered by searches containing 'anmäl' in Swedish. Items without statements on who made the accusations were excluded.

It could be argued that observed behaviour is a result of an unlucky coincidence of innocent errors and modest preconceptions. To explore this perspective, a probabilistic model is postulated to pinpoint the likelihood of a certain score of distorted of facts. A parsimonious way of capturing this is just to assume that the probability of error, in this case writing that it was the women who reported Assange, is e.g. 10 %. If one believes in the prevalence of mostly objective and independent journalists, i.e. *Guardians*, then the expected number of articles reporting it was the police, is 77, not the seven observed over a period of 170 days[13]. The probability of seven or less correct articles under such conditions, is about 2.4×10^{-69}.

This is arguably, however unlikely it may sound, an understatement, because statements like 'the reporting women' or the 'two young women who reported him for rape' may appear several times in a single item whereas claims that it was the police typically do not.

T5. Probability of a Truthful Report

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	— Binomial Exact — [95% Conf. Interval]	
	85	.0823529	.0298173	.0337525	.1623439

The conjecture is a subset of the stochastic 95 % confidence interval. Neither a 5 % nor 10 % concentration of truthful items can be rejected at the 5 % level. This can of course also be stated in terms of formal hypotheses. In order to increase the strength of the test of the conjecture, the upper bound is chosen. H_0: p = 10 % against the alternatives p ≠ 0.1 (or p < 0.2 or the corresponding p > 0.1).

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[13] In other words, in this case it is assumed that whomever the articles portray as the initiator of the Police Report, are regarded as independent and identically distributed observations from a random variable. In this case X∈Bin(85,p), p = 1/10. Technically, the expected number is between 76 and 77, the latter is slightly more likely. Exactly one article was written every two days on average.

T6. Test of H₀: p = 10 %

```
One-sample test of proportion               Reporter: Number of obs =        85
```

Variable	Mean	Std. Err.	[95% Conf. Interval]
Reporter	.0823529	.0298173	.0239122 .1407937

```
    p = proportion(Reporter)                              z =   -0.5423
Ho: p = 0.1
```

```
     Ha: p < 0.1              Ha: p != 0.1              Ha: p > 0.1
  Pr(Z < z) = 0.2938     Pr(|Z| > |z|) = 0.5876     Pr(Z > z) = 0.7062
```

The conjecture (H₀) cannot be rejected ***.[14]

It is also instructive to think of the intermediary case when Chancie is employed. Table 1 shows that H₀: p = 50 % can be rejected. The probability of a more modest score of seven or less is about 1.4×10^{-16}.

To consider alternatives to a PM, it is instructive to consult the results from Kahan (2017). It is possible to deduce from their estimates on high-ability individuals, that if the correct answer matches the subject's political identity, then the probability[15] of a correct answer is roughly 80 %. Mismatch lowers this probability to about 37 %. What would happen if managers decided to regulate the number of articles written by each group in this probabilistic setup? The estimated expected number of correct assessments of who made the report should be 49 if responsibilities are split evenly, i.e. polarization. Not far from the 43 when 'Chancie' (50 %) is assumed, and rejected at the level of being seriously injured by space debris on earth per annum.

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[14] This is of course true for both boundary values of the conjecture. All calculations are carried out in STATA or Mathematica.

[15] These figures are estimates for conservatives to rig the analysis against the thesis. However, the figures for liberals are very close to these (80%, and 40%).

Eq. 12 is in this setting:

$$J = \sum_{j \in G} [T_{xj}], \, T_{xD} \in \text{Bin}(\alpha_{XD}, 0.8), T_{xM} \in \text{Bin}(85 - \alpha_{XD}, p_{xD}), \alpha_{XD} \in [0,85]$$

F.4 J(A$_x$=85,p$_{xD}$=0.8,p$_{xM}$=0.37,α_{xD}+α_{xM}= A$_x$)

Pr.Less or equal to 7
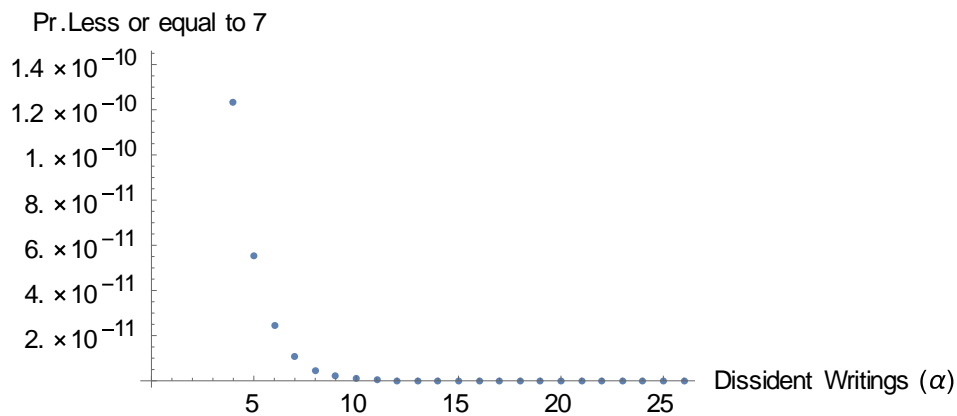
All combinations are extremely unlikely, and the likelihood is strictly decreasing. It drops to 6.7×10^{-46} when assuming a strictly dissident press.

On independence

Naturally, the independence assumption should be questioned. However, such a refutation would be close to assume the conclusions of rather unforgiving conjectures on the Swedish journalistic profession – some of which are rather controversial. Contagion of errors in a manner which conforms to the elite opinion is by no means inconsistent with a PM. In conclusion, assumptions regarding independence do not alter the main results of this paper. However the flavour of the explanation would change, e.g. by invoking deliberate synchronization, conspiracy, or threats from representatives of the elite, beyond what is usually conceived as flak. Dependence will be explored with due diligence in forthcoming Footnotes.

There are nevertheless several quandaries involved which work against such a proposition. Among the seven newspapers regarded as the Swedish nation-wide press, six are in the sample[16]. At least 66 different journalists were involved in 85 observations about who made a (police) report.

Considerations about path dependency and persistence are also challenged by data. To begin with, considering the initial conditions, there are no unquestionable reasons to why the opposite outcome was not realized. The scoop, i.e. the initial article, quoted the foremost authority present at the time (the on-duty prosecutor) – who clearly stated that the police reported. The scoop was rather naturally the only article in print on the issue that day. The following day, 2/5 items made correct assertions about who reported. The risk of truth contagion, and propagation, was moreover wide-spread across outlets. Four of six newspapers in the sample printed items which clearly stated that it was the police on various occasions.

At a first glance, it could be argued that there are indeed traces of error contagion. Two journalists did change their mind on this matter, from a correct reporting, to an erroneous one, in subsequent co-written articles. These two could for instance, also have been influenced by an interview with the older politically active plaintiff published online. The older woman claimed, at odds with the younger plaintiff's statements, and subsequent consensus of the UK Supreme Court, that the younger woman wanted to report Assange for rape (Supreme Court, 2011). A degree of confusion is thus not unreasonable for a randomly selected journalist who fails to treat the facts with due diligence.

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[16] The seventh is a business newspaper, which is an outlier in the full sample in terms of the low number of articles which mention 'Assange'.

Remarkably enough, it is the least expected journalists in this regard who change their minds or failed to object to their co-worker's erroneous assertions. One is none less than Diamant Salihu, who was subsequently awarded for his pioneering scoop about Assange[17]. The other is Oisín Cantwell, known for his analyses on legal issues. Furthermore, Cantwell challenged the erroneous reporting at the outset. He lamented the absurdity of proceeding with an investigation which had been narrowed down to a woman that did not even want to report Assange[18]. In spite of this, conflicting claims are made in the same items under an incubation phase. Then the dissonance disappears and he becomes clear on the issue later on, but this time referring to the plaintiffs as 'the women who reported Assange for sex crime'.[19] Therefore, the proposition of error contagion to a host who unwittingly repeats errors, seems far-fetched. A conscious decision to tell the truth or to lie, is consistent with observed behaviour rather naturally. An assertion which by no means excludes peer-pressure.

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[17] Diamant Salihu later wrote articles which are close to defamation of critics, and with a remarkable high frequency of distortions which are far-fetched to treat as unintentional. Several of his pieces could be regarded as propagandistic.

[18] The Chief Prosecutor (who replaced the on-duty) dropped most of the allegations the day after the infamous scoop.

[19] This journalist was subsequently accused of sex crimes himself. He lost his job but got it back after a while. Cognitive dissonance is a recurrent theme in his work about Assange.

SMS

The SMS communication, widely distributed by Assange's legal advisers, reveals that the younger plaintiff:

(i)   Felt railroaded by the police and others in her surrounding

(ii)   Had no intention to report Julian Assange to the police, but the police was eager to get hold of him (14:26)

(iii)   Was shocked when she heard that Julian Assange was detained because she only wanted him tested (17:06)

(iv)   She did 'not want to accuse him of anything'. Thought 'it was the police who made up the charges' (22:25).

Note that no formal charges from Swedish authorities have been made against Assange to date[20].

The items about the police allegations were covered with detailed descriptions of evidence in terms of interviews, witness statements, police documents etc. The scoop is obviously a leak to begin with. The treatment of the act which formally initiated the investigation is endowed with symbolic significance, potent enough to alter the public's perception of the process against Mr. Assange. (For details, see Echeverría, 2018)

The SMS sent by the younger plaintiff are also crucial in this regard. Not only did she oppose the claims of rape, she clearly states that she thought 'it was the police who made up the charges'. In her opinion, she was disrespected by the 'police and others' to the extent she felt 'railroaded'. They possess several intriguing newsworthy elements.

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[20] These facts have been widely circulated and scrutinized at various formal sessions. They are consistent the UK Supreme Court's consensus about the state of affairs regarding the case. For reference see also Robinson (2011), Rudling (2011) and Assange (2013).

As pieces of evidence, the SMS were endowed with enough weight to perturb the dominant narrative, shape the public perception of the process. Her strong opposition to the course of action of the police against her will, would fit perfectly in a multitude of feminist discourses. They also contradict the older politically active plaintiff's early claim that the younger woman wanted to report Assange to the police for rape, a claim which is at odds with, for instance, the UK Supreme Court's consensus about the state of affairs. In other words, any ambitious and competent Swedish journalist could have achieved a decent scoop based on the SMS, with plenty of opportunities for serious investigative journalism, graphic descriptions, and still completely in line with profit motives or a feministic agenda. The latter was frequently singled out as an alleged motive to the process against Mr. Assange, and Swedish journalism in general.

The newsworthiness makes them suitable for a challenging test of media bias against Mr. Assange, in accordance with a propaganda model. Due to their status as evidence which would have countered misleading information, the prediction is that they will be suppressed or their content will be distorted to fit the parameters of the elite discourse. Searches on 'SMS' illuminate this critical topic at the important initial stage of the process efficiently. The strategy is to base the searches on the complement set of the sets consisting of the elite opinion and critics when it intersect trusted neutral sources such as legal proceedings. A methodological lesson stemming from this research is that experiments, based on simple searches, on single keywords, are highly informative if chosen rigorously.[21]

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[21] Over the course of the project, a battery of alternative searches were performed to check the method. Among other things, searches on 'communication', 'message', 'document', 'contact'. In addition, all articles from 18th of November 2010 (the Swedish lawyer was allowed to see some, but not acquire evidence) to the extradition proceedings February 2011 were checked – the conclusions remain. Simple searches on SMS are as expected on point. These searches are furthermore complemented with the study of the articles related to Assange's legal counsel and different permutations of the searches – this latter study alone amounts to 256 items. For further information about the SMS samples, see Echeverría (2018, p.390-395, p.398-411)

The hypotheses are completely analogous to the ones in the previous sections. It was originally conjectured that about 5-10 % of the items on the communication of the women would appear as evidence in favour of Mr. Assange.

T7. Women's SMS as Evidence

SMS Content	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
NO	12	92.31	92.31
YES	1	7.69	100.00
Total	13	100.00	

The most striking feature of the sample is its meagre size. On average, four articles are written every 729th day over a period of 2187 days. Only three were written before the fall of 2014 ($\approx$1.5‰) when the exception was published, the last one before that was written February 2011. Seven were written in 2016.

T8. Probability of Revealing Content

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	— Binomial Exact — [95% Conf. Interval]	
	13	.0769231	.0739053	.0019456	.3602974

Clearly, the hypothesis of a 5-10 % deviation cannot be rejected at a 5 % level. However, a state of the world where journalism is committed to truth and is unbiased to the extent that there is only a 10 % chance of omission, is very unlikely ($\approx$1.2*10^{-11}). It is also evident that an unbiased but

partially truthful state of the world also can be rejected at the 5 % level. The probability of flipping a fair coin thirteen times and ending up with none or only one face in favour of truth is 7/4096. Pseudo neutrality can therefore be rejected at ** significance.

In summary, the women's SMS are treated as metadata, with a unique exception after almost four years. Furthermore, seven of thirteen of these items make false statements about that the women reported Assange for a sex crime. The modest number of observations is ameliorated with simulations in order to enhance the Maximum Likelihood estimate of truthful reports. Table 5 below shows that the probability of publishing the content of the younger woman's SMS is about 7.7 %.

T9. Non-Parametric Bootstrap (Max Likelihood)

Point Estimate	[95% Conf. Interval]
P = 0.0770	[0.0769, 0.0772]
Simulations	[99.9% Conf. Interval]
n = 1x10^6	[0.0768, 0.0773]

Once the estimated probability of an objective reporting becomes minuscule, but within the boundaries of pre-emptive openness[22], reality ceases to be an anomaly, and observed history is once again a realistic proposition – its likelihood improves to 73.6 %.

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[22] The intervals are open, in spite of the graphics. As expected, the bootstrap estimate (0.770361), is very close to the maximum likelihood estimate (0.0769231).

SMS Against

As expected, there was no controversy in the press when Assange finally left Sweden. The reason is simple, he was allowed to do so, and did so only after his lawyer had consulted the prosecutor about the matter. Assange waited over a month to be heard in Sweden before he left. He was not heard, and still the prosecutor did not object to his travel abroad. Prosecutor Marianne Ny finally decided to detain Assange in his absence, over one month after the police accusations. This coincided with the day he had planned to leave Sweden. For reasons unknown, Assange was nevertheless allowed to take his flight without being detained. Once in London, the prosecutor refused to hear him through alternative means, otherwise routinely used. The Swedish prosecutor then proceeded by issuing an international arrest warrant because Assange was not deemed to be expeditious enough in making his way back to Sweden.

The storyline after the police accusations, up to the international arrest warrant, has been under a singular scrutiny. It was discussed from various angles under the extradition hearings in Belmarsh and in the press. The degree of preoccupation with this topic apparent in the witness statements and in the ruling, was at least on par with the aforementioned SMS of the plaintiff's.

In summary, Assange should have been heard within a week in accordance with Swedish legal praxis and recommendations. Assange wanted to be heard at once. September got particular attention in the extradition proceedings in Belmarsh. His 'star lawyer' Björn Hurtig, contacted the prosecutor about a hearing as soon as he was appointed. Several contact attempts were made on Mr. Assange's behalf under a period of three weeks that month, without a valid confirmation from the prosecutor which would settle the matter.

The prosecutor was subsequently asked if Assange could leave the country, and he got permission to do so. Assange informed his lawyer that he would be hard to reach the last week of September. His low-key approach can be attributed to the historical leaks his organization WikiLeaks was working on at the time. Alas, it was exactly that week the prosecutor contacted lawyer Hurtig about a hearing, which for some reason was undertaken via SMS. The prosecutor detained Julian Assange in his absence on September 27th 2010 when he was still in Sweden. He was nevertheless allowed to board his flight from Arlanda and leave the country without detention.

These facts, which were accepted at court[23], are in line with the narrative of the press until the Belmarsh proceedings, except Hurtig's SMS. So why did Hurtig's SMS conversation with the prosecutor suddenly attract such attention? Because Judge Riddle thought that Hurtig had misled the court. Hurtig had in his written statement implied that he had one-sidedly pushed for a hearing in September. As the facts show, this was however not entirely true, due to the SMS with the prosecutor the last week of the month, the same week Assange was hard to reach.

Startlingly, the witness statement of Chief Prosecutor Marianne Ny displayed a remarkable symmetry in this regard. Both the lawyer and the prosecutor claimed the month of September in their written witness statements. The most obvious difference being, the three times longer period the prosecutor was misleading about. Also three times the appropriate time limit to arrange a hearing, according to Swedish procedure put in place to protect crime victims. For some uncanny reason Judge Riddle only discussed Lawyer Hurtig's relatively minor distortion, and simultaneously ignored the prosecutor's greater misrepresentation. On logical grounds alone, his deduction is of course invalid.

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[23] The facts in this paper have been widely distributed and scrutinized many times over by scholars, journalists, and law professionals at court. The only piece of aforementioned evidence not visible in the Belmarsh ruling of Judge Riddle is the one about allowing Mr. Assange to board his plane in spite of the detention warrant issued earlier that day.

SMS Against all Odds

In a state of the world inhabited by truth-telling and unbiased journalist professionals, the misleading statements of the lawyer and the prosecutor would both become subjects of scrutiny before and after the judge's fallacious conclusion. If the state of the world is such that a propaganda model governs the behaviour of journalism, the prediction is instead that the conclusion of Judge Riddle will dominate after the extradition proceedings, with a deviation in the interval 0-10 %.

Although a scenario were journalists are biased and untruthful to the extent that truth is an error seems rather machine-like and gloomy, reality was more mechanical than the model. I could not find a single item which told about Prosecutor Mariane Ny's misleading witness statement[24]. I could not find any critique of Judge Riddle's verdict. On the contrary, Judge Riddle's conclusions were taken at face value by the press, which used them as a point of departure for historical revisionism. Claims that it had been the prosecutor who had chased Assange, and not the other way around, were now printed. The recursive reference and repetition of these double standards created an extraordinary fractal geometry.

This result is comparable with earlier findings on the free war-time press in the US under the invasion of Vietnam or the authoritarian press behind the so called Iron Curtain. Further comparison between the prosecutor and the lawyer's communication is superfluous due to the extreme bias, more challenging test may be performed in the future as a matter of exercise or amusement.

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[24] I am grateful for information on any findings which I may have overlooked. For additional information about the SMS samples, see Echeverría (2018, p.390-395, p.398-411)

Additional Topics

For honourable mentions see opinions on *guarantees*, *Propaganda Fractals*, or the *Maxim of the Rational Rebel* (Ibid, pp.326-351, 166-174, 370-390).

Human Rights

Human rights abuses is central to the case, such concerns were raised almost immediately by acclaimed public intellectuals, and later on the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention. Only 48 items express some sort of opinion about human rights violations, if the sample is rigged against the thesis. Such figure is about 1/14th of the items mentioning rape, and 2% of the items in total. If there are any dissidents in the sample at all, then it is in this subset they are to be found, as human rights concerns was, and still is, one of the most important arguments in defence of Mr. Assange.

Nevertheless, most of the news items were suspect to credibility asymmetries, meaning that there was a strong tendency for relatively more authoritative figures to advocate the elite opinion. Several of those who were allowed to champion the dissident view were portrayed in a manner which endowed them with little credibility. Only 6/20 opinion pieces made allusions which could be interpreted as contrarian, including the reader comment titled *Feministic Banana Dictatorship*. These digressions were typically restricted to a few lines. In conclusion, a negligible share of the total text mass or number of articles expressed human rights concerns.

The Opinion of the Establishment

To sample more established writers, only those who had more than one article (in Arikelsök) were selected in the Retriever database. This led to a set of 13 journalists with more than one opinion piece, 101 items in total. 42/58 with critique critiqued Assange and associates. 100% of the items critical of the process reflected the elite opinion. Only 4% deviate to some

extent. Several items contained personal attacks, innuendos and vulgar language. Essential facts about the process are omitted, and several pieces are incoherent. These features amounted to fact resistance.

Summary and Conclusions

The analytical approach to journalism in this paper is a footnote with several methodological and theoretical contributions, and provides a basis for further inquiry. The first step was to introduce an accounting perspective, from which hypotheses could be derived from a minimalistic setup. An immediate result is that trendy alternatives about polarization, influenced by the behavioral sciences, are not plausible overarching explanations. This topic will be given more attention in forthcoming Footnotes.

A lean probabilistic articulation based on propaganda accounting is enough to capture the essentials of a propaganda model in particular, and to make exact predictions. Especially, it is possible, and indeed reasonable, to test the theory of Herman & Chomsky (2002) with two hypotheses. It follows that it is possible to *accept* (not merely fail to reject) the hypothesis of a propagandistic press. This is feasible for more general formalised theories with predictions of parameters just a few percentage points apart.

I also prove that journalism on the Assange case in the Swedish nation-wide press is propaganda, in the simple and correct sense that the proposition has to be accepted in view of overwhelming evidence. The proportions on the aggregate, and in specific topics are skewed to the extent that probabilities at the subatomic scale have to be grasped, especially if independent, truth-telling professionals are assumed. As a rule of thumb, it was far more likely for a person 2011-2016 to suffer severe trauma as a victim of space debris, than the proposition that journalism on Assange was accurate or anti-establishment.

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