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DANGEROUS POPULISTS: Are they one and the same in the eyes of the press?

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LEIDEN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
MASTER OF ARTS
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DANGEROUS POPULISTS:

Are they one and the same in the eyes of the press?



Authoritarian populism. Illustration: Boy Dominguez

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ever since the 2008 financial recession, a wave of right-wing reactionary parties has spread across the globe, electing leaders with similar characteristics (Passari, 2020; Beck, Saka, & Volpin, 2020). Recurrently, the opposition to aspects of globalization and international governance; belief in cultural and religious superiority; praise of grassroots values; and hostility towards the “elite-led” economic, cultural and political apparatus are common traits of how these movements perceive the world (Mudde, 2019; Norris & Ingerhart 2019). In Europe, an upsurge of anti-EU sentiments, nationalism, economic protectionism, and xenophobia emerged as part of a wave of illiberal populism (Regilme 2019). Analogous movements manifested in the Global South, with various leaders deploying populist ideology to strengthen their grip on power while abandoning human rights standards, persecuting political opposition and dismantling oversight institutions (Regilme, 2021; Saad-Filho & Boffo, 2021). Moreover, these reactionary populists have systematically confronted news organizations and harassed reporters, which led *Reporters Without Borders* to denounce them as predators who impede the free exercise of journalism (RSF, 2021). Frontal attacks on media outlets became standard in the playbook of leaders who sought greater narrative control, as seen in the rhetoric of former US President Donald Trump and Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro.

The Fake News hates me saying that they are the enemy of the People only because they know it's TRUE. I am providing a great service by explaining this to the American People. They purposely cause great division & distrust. They can also cause War! They are very dangerous & sick! (Donald Trump's *Twitter* as cited in *CNBC*, 2018)

This Globo is a shit press. You guys suck at the press. Shut up. You are scoundrels. You do scoundrel, scoundrel journalism that doesn't help at all. You destroy the Brazilian family, you destroy the Brazilian religion, you are no good. *Rede Globo* sucks, it's a bad news agency. (Jair Bolsonaro as cited in *PODER360*, 2021)

As their notoriety rose, populism gained amplified coverage in the media as a theme. These individuals' political impropriety and scandalous rhetoric offered fertile ground for journalists to capitalize on stories about the rise of far-right movements worldwide (Manucci, 2017). With the proliferation of tabloids, *infotainment* blogs, and gratuitous social media, traditional news organizations adapted their reporting style to retain and capture audiences. As a result, coverage disproportionately focused on politically incorrect right-wing conservative leaders and their agenda. Additionally, in liberal outlets, “populist” became a standard signifier

to denounce these figures (Waisbord, 2018).

According to Mudde (2004), populism is a thin-ideology that juxtaposes the “true people” and the “corrupt others”, the latter being a direct affront to the will of the former. However, the *raison d'être* for popular support lies in the thick-ideology movements attach themselves to, encompassing variations on the left and the right. Mudde warns about the dangers of overplaying the populist card when denouncing “radical-right” figures, allowing the term to be misinterpreted and poorly defined (Baker, 2019). Nevertheless, renowned news organizations condemn “the populist surge” as a universally acknowledged concept and a threat to democratic governance. This approach tends to blame and stigmatize voters whilst ignoring the socioeconomic realities that led to the downfall of traditional centrist political parties, which failed to address economic stagnation and fear of national decline (Mondon & Winter, 2019).

Despite recent electoral losses worldwide, right-wing populist movements targeting democratic institutions and chanting a dichotomous perception of society gain constant strength (Meyer, 2021). The media is a critical societal force that influences the political agenda and directs public opinion, as it imposes interpretive frameworks on relevant events and their actors (McCombs, 2014). Understanding how liberal news outlets portray illiberal and autocratic movements and their leaders helps comprehend the elements used to conceptualize populism and what moral evaluation bestowed on readers. This research dives into media and populism by investigating the interpretative frames *The New York Times* (NYT) constructs for right-wing populist leaders. To identify the frames, discourses and moral evaluations, I analyze the language surrounding the term populism in Trump and Bolsonaro’s coverage between 2018 and 2021. Therefore, the following research question is formulated.

- How does *The New York Times* portray populism in the reporting of Donald Trump and Jair Bolsonaro?

With that objective, I investigate the rhetorical employment of populism to characterize the presidents and the interaction with covered political developments. The analysis seeks to identify the common frames drawn for Trump and Bolsonaro and ascertain if any relevant differences manifest in the discourses. Hence, the work recognizes how the NYT depicts populism and orients its audience towards certain conclusions. I argue that the newspaper imposes interpretative frames that attribute the populist trait as a corroborating feature in the presidents’: (a) threat to liberal democracy and its institutions; (b) inability to promote effective

climate action; and (c) response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Moreover, the *NYT* perceives Brazilian (and Latin American) democracy as more susceptible to the “populist threat” given the “immaturity” of its institutions, and sees the US as a natural spokesman and sponsor for democracy promotion internationally. Finally, reporting appears to converge towards a representation of populism aligned with “us vs them” rhetoric and associated with right-wing reactionary movements, however presenting inconsistencies and contradictions when denouncing variants deemed on the left end of the spectrum.

By combining frame and discourse analysis, the work sets the path for uncovering the relationship between acclaimed liberal news outlets and right-wing figures, generating a new academic angle on populism and media effects. To achieve the proposed objective, I will first provide a literature review to determine the research’s contribution to the theoretical debate. Subsequently, I contextualize the case selection and medium of analysis. Then, I conceptualize the elements of media framing and demonstrate the methods employed to analyze *NYT* articles. The discussion section presents an overview of the reporting and analyses the recurrent frames observed in the coverage. Finally, the work is concluded with the achieved results, restrictions and path forward.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter overviews the literature surrounding the conceptualization of populism, the notions behind right-wing populism and debates over terminology. Next, it explains how populist movements have taken place in the Global South and North, emphasizing Brazil and the US to contextualize the selected cases. Finally, it overviews the current debates on populism and media and explains the current research's contribution.

2.1. *Populism as a contested term*

Populism became a hot topic in the global political debate since right-wing nationalist movements gained strength in Europe and the US. However, before being a focal point in the media, academia long debated its existence and implications for geopolitics. Notable authors include Shils, Hofstadter, Laclau, Mouffe, and others. Naturally, disruptions regarding the meaning of populism materialized, opening space for the term to become generalized and trivial. Populism categorizes authoritarian and anti-system political movements that seek to “empower the true people” (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013). Simultaneously, it addresses left-leaning movements in Latin America that seek to increase redistributive economic policies (Madrid, 2008). Hence, adopting a clear, unified understanding of populism is necessary to advance research purposefully. Over recent years, three variants of conceptual approaches manifested: (1) populism as a discursive style, (2) an ideology, and (3) a type of political mobilization (Moffitt & Tormey, 2014). All variants, despite their differences, have commonalities and overlap.

More present in Latin American studies, populism as a form of mobilization appears in economic policies aimed at nationalizing resources and redistributing income in favor of *el pueblo* (Madrid, 2008; Levitsky & Roberts, 2011). The discursive style focuses on the rhetoric that identifies politics as a struggle between the people and the oligarchy, meaning a binary moral dimension to political conflicts (Torre, 2000; Hawkins, 2009). Lastly, populism is understood as a thin-centered ideology that perceives society with a Manichaeian outlook, where the “corrupt elite” has subverted the will of the “pure people” (Mudde, 2004). The populist determines who the pure people are, and dissidents are portrayed as the “enemy” (Müller 2017). The ideational approach reduces the concept to a minimal core, allowing different ideological features to compose distinctive strands of populism, being right-or-left-wing, inclusionary or exclusionary (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013; Hawkins & Kaltwasser,

2017).

The research indicates that the *NYT* predominantly conveys populism as an interpretation of political reality which confronts an idealized version of the “people” with the anti-popular “others,” whether political opponents, social minorities, the international community or various elites. Nevertheless, this does not exclude employment with distinct connotations, e.g., to signify the adoption of specific nationalistic economic policies for electoral purposes. Indeed, this study investigates how the *NYT* conceptualizes the term, accounting for inconsistencies or lack of definitions.

2.2.Right-wing Populism

The right-wing variant of populism combines the Manichean worldview with conservative ideology, focusing on cultural and economic aspects of everyday life to galvanize support. According to Rodrik (2019), economic policies that resulted in increased financialization, austerity, wage stagnation, rising inequality, and de-industrialization fomented the expansion of right-wing populist ideology. Additionally, conservative values such as religion and family unity have clashed with secular beliefs associated with younger generations who continuously gained prominence and political influence. This displacement created a common ground for conservative voters to support movements that praise cultural superiority and nativism, advocate for welfare *chauvinism*, oppose migration and perceive globalization as contrary to “Western-Christian” core values (Norris & Ingerhart 2019). Besides, incorporating religious elements allows for the definition of the “true people” under faith-based criteria (Marzouki, MacDonnell, & Roy, 2016).

Moreover, right-wing populists often engage with conspiracy theories that deny climate change and oppose vaccination, disseminating doubt about the veracity of threats announced by their opposing “liberal globalist elite”, including the scientific community (Huber, 2020; Eberl, Huber, & Greussing, 2021). Therefore, leaders portray science-abiding policies as elite-led conspiracies designed to deteriorate the wellbeing and prosperity of the “true people”. The convergence towards unified guidelines – e.g., religion, cultural supremacy and science skepticism - strengthens collective power and provides sufficient political representation to counter traditional centrist and leftist movements (Müller, 2017). Despite framing their political claim as the people’s will, right-wing populism has illiberal, anti-pluralist, and authoritarian traits, as the entitlement to implement a single pre-established popular will

opposes the liberal, pluralist and participatory political process (Moffitt, 2017). Meanwhile, left-leaning populism primarily defines “the people” according to socioeconomic structures that facilitate the disproportionate accumulation of capital by the “elites”. Consequently, it does not have a personalistic definition of the “others” and proposes transformative and egalitarian resolutions without the necessary exclusion of specific groups (Gandesha, 2018).

Scholars debate the appropriateness of merely characterizing some regimes as right-wing populists. For example, Regilme (2021) argues that a more assertive description is found in the use of “illiberal” and “authoritarian” to describe Rodrigo Duterte’s politics. This research understands right-wing populism as the Manichaeian division of society in service of nationalist and conservative policies desired by the culturally homogenous “true people” (Greven, 2017). This generalized definition accounts for other trends that corroborate populist ideology, such as illiberalism, nativism and authoritarianism. Additionally, in journalistic coverage, the signifier populist is combined with other elements such as authoritarian, far-right and illiberal. Comprehending these combinations in *NYT*’s reporting is fundamental for grasping the outlet’s conceptualization of the phenomenon.

2.3. Populism in the Global South and Global North

In the Global North, populist movements gained strength after the 2008 financial crisis that left welfare states with curbed capabilities (Passari, 2020). Furthermore, the loss of unionized blue-collar jobs, the industrial shift towards Southeast Asia, and continuous migratory fluxes to the United States and Europe contributed to the supply-demand of right-wing exclusionary forms of populism that sought to retain cultural hegemony and reclaim economic primacy (Mudde, 2019; Van Dyck 2021). In the United States, right-wing populism dates back to President Andrew Jackson, known for his opposition to centralized institutions and persecution of native-Americans to expand agriculture in the South (Matthews, 2016). Donald Trump embraced Jackson’s legacy as a true folk hero and a personal inspiration (Serhan, 2020). Trump’s variation of populism combines cultural and economic elements (Meyer, 2021). The former president consistently emphasized religious traditionalism, law and order, opposed immigration and free trade, and advocated “reclaiming national sovereignty” (Norris & Ingerhart, 2019). On the opposite side of the spectrum, politicians like Bernie Sanders articulate their rhetoric against historical racial and economic injustices perpetrated by the elites, bringing inclusionary policies that target financial elites’ unchecked dominance

(Postel, 2016).

In the Global South, populist movements with authoritarian traits appeared in several countries, like the Philippines and Turkey. Their leaders promote nationalist and religious discourse to gain popular support while mobilizing the state apparatus to uphold civil rights via authoritarian measures and dismantling democratic checks (Regilme, 2019, 2021). In Latin America, different political backgrounds and cultural realities influenced the appearance of populism. The phenomenon dates back to the early-20th century, with charismatic leaders, e.g., Getúlio Vargas and Juan Perón, associated with macroeconomic policies targeting the region's longstanding inequalities and promoting self-sufficiency and development (Hawkins & Kaltwasser, 2017; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2012). More recently, "pink tide" movements across the continent were led by political outsiders focusing on countering the elite establishment in favor of laborious class interests long ignored – figures like Hugo Chávez and Evo Morales stand out (Madrid, 2008; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013, 2017; Edwards, 2019).

Bolsonaro's election established a turning point for the region. With an authoritarian and conservative platform, his victory resulted from a fragile political and economic climate created by a general distrust of traditional institutions and corruption schemes tied to longstanding politicians (Soares de Lima & Albuquerque, 2019). Tamaki and Fuks (2020) state that Bolsonaro's populism encompasses a nationalistic sentiment that obfuscates the people and promotes patriotism under conservative religious values. Finally, Ichimaru and Cardoso (2020) argue that Bolsonaro has anti-democratic authoritarian aspirations, willing to cement his grip on power and overturn oversight instruments that safeguard minorities and fundamental rights.

Given the vast literature concerning the populist phenomenon in different global regions, this study seeks to ascertain if *NYT*'s reporting accounts for the specificities of Trump's and Bolsonaro's ascension and if they influence the newspaper's interpretation and evaluation.

2.4. Populism and the Media

The proliferation of communication channels increased competition for market share and forced traditional mediums to revisit their communications strategies. Given the political sphere's natural dependency on the media to shape their public perception, market logic encouraged politicians to provide more dramatization and spectacle to gain more mediatic

visibility (Mazzoleni, 2003, 2008). Waisbord (2018) argues that established outlets gave primacy to the disruptive discourses of populists who dramatized current affairs and deployed emotive language to engage audiences' discontent, obsessions and beliefs. Therefore anti-establishment rhetoric and blame attribution increased the coverage of right-wing populist leaders (Hameleers, Bos, and de Vreese, 2019). Hameleers and Vliegenhart (2020) contend that people-centric, anti-elitist and right-and-left-exclusionist coverage made populism more palpable and relatable to the electorate. Furthermore, Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart (2007) attested the link between far-right success and media coverage in the Netherlands, with populist parties with anti-immigration discourse benefiting from extensive reporting on immigration-related issues and criminality.

To stun readers and grasp their attention, the media unified the label populist for leaders without discernable commonalities (e.g., Berlusconi, Gordon Brown and Hugo Chávez), affecting the credibility of publications (Bale, Kessel & Taggart, 2011). Reporters tasked with covering different political movements seek to preserve neutrality, therefore, embracing a broad generalized meaning of populism to avoid terminology perceived as biased (Baker, 2019; Postel, 2016). In that sense, populism was weaponized as a signal of discredit and opposition by liberal news, resulting in the term's trivialization and use for effect rather than explanation. Mudde (2017) stresses that radical-right elements like authoritarianism and nativism are being camouflaged under the conceptualization of populism. Meanwhile, right-wing parties have embraced the populist label to justify their relatability with the "true people" (Serhan, 2020). Hence, the misrepresentation of the radical right as conservative and populist offers it a veneer of respectability and facilitates the expansion of its rhetoric under misguided labels (Feffer, 2021). In that sense, Kramer and Langmann (2020) presented the journalistic challenges in the coverage of right-wing populists. Between dealing with systematic attacks from leaders and supporters, fearing impartiality claims and criticism for overemphasizing them in coverage, journalists face a herculean task when covering populist movements and their agenda. Especially given that right-wing illiberal and authoritarian characters threaten to undermine the political order liberal journalism aims to safeguard.

Kusters (2017) demonstrated how the media frame towards right-wing parties shifted in the Netherlands over time, moving from an unknown electoral phenomenon to "right-wing anti-establishment" with a negative connotation. Brown and Mondon's (2021) analysis of *The Guardian* concluded that increased coverage of right-wing populism legitimized populist parties' public appeal and accelerated their mainstreaming. The uncritical use of the term

facilitated its trivialization and euphemisation. Additionally, the authors noted coverage disproportionately shifting the blame on supporters (e.g., white working-class and religious communities) instead of addressing the structural implications. Finally, Araújo and Prior (2021) demonstrated the differences in framing between national and international newspapers' coverage of Bolsonaro's election. They concluded that international liberal publications emphasized Bolsonaro's populist trait and dangers posed to the democratic order, while Brazilian outlets naturalized his candidacy and praised his liberal economic agenda.

The Literature Review demonstrated how scholars have dealt with the definition of populism, the format of right-wing populism, its appearance in the Global North and South and its relation to the media. The latter focuses on the media's relationship and depiction of populism, the challenges for journalists, and the cause and effects of the uncritical use of populism. Previous studies demonstrated how different mediums used rhetorical mechanisms to frame populist movements and leaders in distinct manners. This research innovates and expands previous literature as it seems to be the first dedicated to comprehending the liberal media's conceptualization of populism in the coverage of right-wing reactionary ideologues, therefore orienting frame identification surrounding the term.

3. THEORY AND METHODS

This study focused on better understanding the relationship between acclaimed liberal news outlets and their depiction of populism under right-wing ideologues. Professional journalism aims to provide readers with explanations, definitions, evaluations and criticism of political phenomena, oftentimes by comparing different manifestations at a global level. The literature suggests that populism in the media is used pejoratively to discredit the opposition, i.e., a “*label to pin on one’s political enemies and their stances and policies*” (Bale et al., 2011, p. 127). Hence, the lack of proper definition and inconsistent use by publications. The research analyzed *NYT* framing of Donald Trump and Jair Bolsonaro to enlighten how the liberal media relates right-wing populism to covered political developments. Investigating the portrayal of both presidents contributed to the macro perspective as it illustrated the interpretative frames created to orient readers. In other words, observations within Bolsonaro and Trump’s coverage permitted inferring trends for liberal media’s portrayal of other denounced right-wing populists. Moreover, contrasting leaders in different geographic socioeconomic environments allowed ascertaining the existence of biases that influence reporting’s rhetoric.

3.1. Brazil and the United States as a case study

Comparative case studies provide a detailed understanding of local realities, causal mechanisms, processes, policies, motivations, decisions, beliefs, and constraints, which large-N analyses struggle to compose. Seawright and Gerring (2008) argue that case selection must account for: (1) a representative sample; and (2) useful application of the theoretical framework under analysis. According to Gerring (2004), the defining feature of case studies is the reliance on evidence drawn from limited cases with the goal of illuminating features of the broader debate. Bolsonaro and Trump have been selected based on the most similar category, as per Gerring’s classification. In this specific instance, the two presidents differ in geographical region and circumstances of ascendancy. Still, they are similar in various factors that led to their equivalence in media coverage.

Trump and Bolsonaro’s antagonism towards liberal news outlets, personalistic relationship with supporters, political “impropriety”, and populist ideology increased their mediatic visibility, which characterized them as right-wing populist leaders who threaten democratic institutions and foment societal divisions. Furthermore, Brazil and the US possess multi-ethnic populations with different cultures and religions that influence the pace of the

political debate. Both countries suffered from economic recessions that fomented discontent toward the political-economic establishment. Additionally, de-industrialization, unemployment, violence and culture shocks helped energized nationalist rhetoric that strengthened Trump and Bolsonaro's appeal (McGann, 2016; Carvalho, 2019). During his tenure, Bolsonaro kept close alignment with Trump, supporting his claims of electoral fraud and questioning the integrity of the Brazilian electoral system. Also, both have implemented neoliberal policies with a nationalist sentiment, opposed aspects of what they call "globalism", and compromised historical alliances in Europe, Asia and Latin America (Zeevaert, 2020). Finally, the presidents consistently questioned climate change's veracity and adopted ineffectual containment policies vis-à-vis the Covid-19 pandemic. Trump and Bolsonaro are commonly compared to other notable figures like Rodrigo Duterte, Recep Erdoğan, Andrzej Duda and Viktor Orbán. All galvanize support based on society's Manichaeic division, and descriptive journalistic pieces often juxtapose their trajectories and policies, which is why Bolsonaro was awarded the nickname "Trump of the Tropics". Therefore, given the nature of political reporting, trends observed within Bolsonaro and Trump's reporting illuminates the coverage of other denounced right-wing populists.

3.2. Relevance of The New York Times

Given its consolidation as one of the world's most prestigious newspapers, the *NYT* was selected as the medium for analysis. The paper has a global presence, with journalists covering when and where developments happen. World leaders constantly reference and consider *NYT*'s reporting, reinforcing its power in political agenda-setting and narrative control. Its website has 130 million singular monthly readers, reaching all corners of the world (Djordjevic, 2021). 72% of subscribers have a university degree, and over 90% identify as Democrats. The newspaper advocates for civil and human rights, democratic governance, the rule of law, economic, political and religious liberties, and freedom of speech, influencing other liberal mediums worldwide. Noteworthy outlets include *The Guardian*, *Le Monde*, *El País*, *Die Zeit*, and others. Therefore, observations within the *NYT* can suggest more significant perspectives on how the liberal media frames right-wing populism as a global phenomenon. Furthermore, its editorial line refutes the argument that its coverage of right-wing populism aims to support the ideology's expansion, even if that may be an unintended consequence of coverage.

3.3. Media Framing

Framing is best described as the perspective from which a news story is told. Since the media influences the construction of public opinion (McCombs, 2014), it affects societal perception of populism. Agenda-setting refers to the media's ability to control the importance and recurrence of themes in the public debate (Walgrave & Swert, 2004). Framing, however, does not focus on what issues the media presents. Instead, it is concerned with how these issues are characterized. Therefore, the act of framing encompasses selecting and emphasizing certain aspects of reality according to editorial preferences. Scheufele (1999) states that framing affects how readers come to acknowledge political and social phenomena. How information is presented in a story, the facts emphasized, and the details excluded all orient audience's perception. For instance, stories covering the use of drugs can approach the problem by framing the issue as a public health concern or a criminal matter. The choice significantly alters the definition of the problem, its causes, consequences and remedies. Nevertheless, political reporting resonates with audiences distinctively (Matthes, 2009). Hence, it must be recognized that recipients have inherent conceptualizations of social reality that limit the extent to which the media can orient opinions (Scheufele, 1999).

Despite the existence of several academic works surrounding framing and its effects, a unified method to recognize frames within media content is lacking. Matthes and Kohring (2008) argue that frames can best be identified via content analysis that singles out their constitutive elements. Entman (1993) attributes four distinct elements that constitute a frame, them being: (1) *defining the problem*, referring to the issues and actors influencing the matter; (2) a *causal interpretation* which offers a diagnosis for the problem; (3) a *moral evaluation* that can be either neutral, negative, or positive; (4) a *treatment recommendation* to address the problem. By using Entman's constitutive elements as a guiding framework, the work consistently identified the frames drawn for both presidents and accounted for the depiction of populism in their constitution.

3.4. Research Process

The research process can be best defined as a qualitative analysis of the discourses encompassing the identified media frames. Discourse analysis examines a text's language to attribute meaning and explain a particular social phenomenon (Fairclough 1995). The frame identification process used four guiding questions to identify their constitutive elements. It is

imperative to mention that “treatment recommendation” was mainly perceived in opinion pieces, as narrative pieces refrain from offering treatment suggestions to retain impartiality. The time frame chosen for article selection ranges from 2018 to 2021. Before 2018, Bolsonaro was non-existent in international media. The period also covers the aftermath of Trump’s presidency, offering a broad range of relevant political developments. Among them: Bolsonaro’s election; democratic retraction worldwide; climate emergency; the 2020 US elections; and Covid-19.

Element of the Frame	Guiding Question
Problem definition	What are the central issues defined in the coverage of Trump and Bolsonaro?
Causal interpretation	How does populist ideology contribute to the issue?
Moral evaluation	Which descriptive terms follow the characterization of populism?
Treatment recommendation	What is advocated to counter the issue?

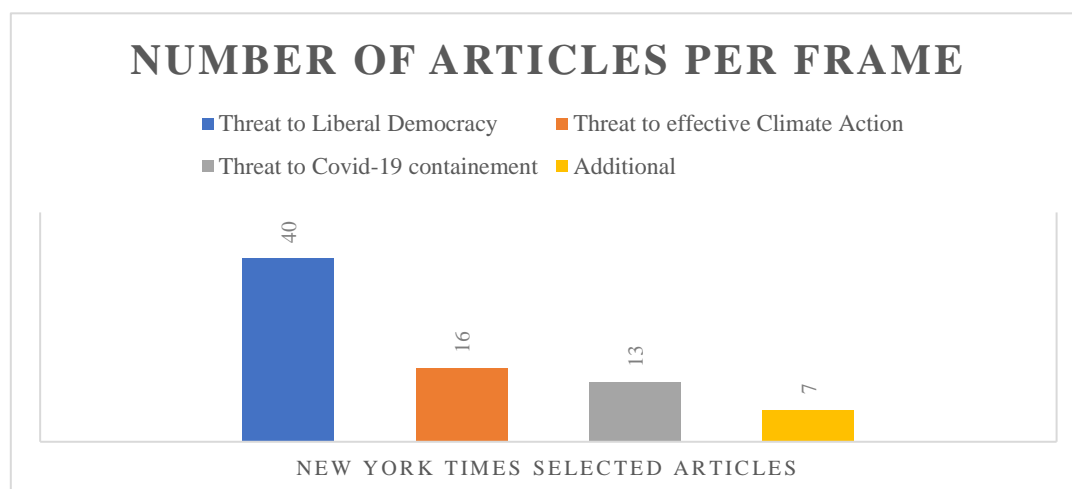
After defining the time frame, the keywords *populis**, Trump, and Bolsonaro were selected to find the articles in the *NYT* search tool. As a result, 90 articles manifested. Consequently, the newspaper articles were thoroughly read and reviewed individually. Pieces that loosely brushed on the populist thematic were disregarded. As a result, 60 articles were selected for investigation and are listed in Appendix 1. The analysis included editorial, sectional, and opinion pieces to holistically comprehend the newspaper’s coverage and positioning. The articles varied in terms of perspective, as they either: (1) cover Bolsonaro and compare him to Trump; (2) cover Trump and use Bolsonaro for contextualization; (3) focus on specific issues that revolve around both leaders (e.g., climate change); or (4) cover other populist leaders and use Trump and Bolsonaro for comparison. Finally, the articles were analyzed with an inductive approach, i.e., using an open view to uncover the existing frames (Semetko, 2000). The choice lies with the fact that, thus far, a gap appears to exist concerning the identification of common themes encompassing liberal media’s portrayal of right-wing populist leaders.

Once the frames were classified (Appendix 2), the discourse analysis process entailed

identifying linguistic and rhetorical mechanisms that orient the notion of populism behind the leaders' portrayal. It is crucial to highlight that the articles classified as "Additional" did not fall under the identified frames. Nevertheless, they remained part of the analysis as they contributed to the overall assessment of how the *NYT* depicts and constructs the meaning of populism. With the described methods, I looked at how the liberal media uses its agenda-setting power to orient the debate, construct the narrative, and engage with its targeted audience. In the following section, I present the observations and analysis.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

To answer the research question, this discussion illustrates the themes and patterns that emerged from the analysis to establish how Trump and Bolsonaro are framed by *The New York Times*. After reading each article individually, three frames emerged to characterize both leaders. Consequently, the presidents were presented as leaders who: (1) are a threat to democracy and its institutions; (2) jeopardize effective Climate Action; and (3) impede proper Covid-19 containment strategies. The signifier “populist” appears as a corroborative term for the act of framing, i.e., the coverage consistently correlated the presidents’ intrinsic populist trait as a defining and justifying feature in their political behavior. This approach makes the reader associate the identified problem with the populist characteristic as the causal explanation, a strategy identified by Mudde (2017) and Serhan (2020). Nevertheless, the newspaper still attempted to provide a holistic explanation of the populist phenomenon, inviting scholars and presenting self-awareness of shortcomings in how the media has dealt with the topic. Therefore, before diving into each frame, I present an overview of reporting to demonstrate how the *NYT* addresses populism. Subsequently, I analyze each recurrent frame separately, providing quotes from the articles to illustrate the observations and identify the medium's distinctions for each context. The underlined parts of the quotes indicate their relevance in the analysis.



4.1. Overview

As a liberal news outlet, the newspaper conveyed populism as a political phenomenon that vilifies part of society, deteriorates the quality of the political debate and menaces democratic governance. Hence, reporting consistently portrayed populists negatively. Furthermore, coverage steadily abstained from supplying readers with a definition of populism, using it as a derogatory term to consolidate the argumentation with other qualifiers, such as autocratic, illiberal, far-right, and others. The medium associated the notion of populism with the invocation of nationalist and cultural rhetoric to capture the electorate and foment segregation within society. However, this research found that the *NYT* also attempts to elucidate the complexity of the debate surrounding populism. The paper presented self-criticism on how it has dealt with the issue and offers reflections to improve coverage efficacy, respectability and convincement. Thus, often bringing in subject matter experts such as Jan-Werner Müller, Daniel Levitsky, Oliver Stuenkel, and presenting professional studies to corroborate arguments. Additionally, some pieces provided detailed analyses to contextualize complex socioeconomic realities. For instance, coverage offered readers significant insight into the current democratic retraction and the appeal of populists that seek to empower “shadowed majorities” and curtail oversight institutions.

(...) reactionary ideologues have been generating fear that minorities’ rights will erode religious and moral principles. (Article 5)

Research suggests it exemplifies weaknesses and tensions inherent to liberal democracy itself. When that happens, voters tend to reject that system (...) toward older styles of government: majoritarian, strong-fisted, us-versus-them rule. (Article 10)

Around the world, rising populists and angry electorates are putting pressure democracy’s “two conflicting imperatives: majority rule and liberalism”. (...) Though [Institutions] are meant to protect universal rights and the common good, they can be portrayed by populists as an elite conspiracy to subvert the people. (Article 17)

The *NYT* defends that democracy requires checks and balances to prevent abusive majority rule. Coverage argued populist leaders exploit angry societal backlashes to denounce democracy as failing and advocate for rule directly on the people’s behalf. Further along, the newspaper attempted to persuade its readers by highlighting the contradictions within populist movements that vouch to pursue the interests of the overshadowed “true people” but adopt economic policies that reinforce the status quo. Given its global outreach, reporting provided various examples and comparisons to defend liberal democracy as the most promising path to

social justice.

The discrediting of politics provides excellent conditions for the rise of these leaders, from Mr. Trump to Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, from Matteo Salvini of Italy to Viktor Orbán of Hungary to Marine Le Pen of France, who work on behalf of the rich and still manage to call themselves populists. Only a serious, profound recasting of the mechanisms of democracy and the recovery of social justice can stop them. (Article 32)

Many Trumpists tend to deny election losses because they don't regard Black and brown people as part of a legitimate majority. But the sign of a functioning democracy is that no distinction is drawn between the "real people" beloved of right-wing populists and everyone else. (Article 60)

In contrast, articles portrayed progressive, inclusionary policies with positive outcomes as the opposing end of the spectrum to right-wing populism. Therefore, the medium orients its readers to associate effective policy-making as diametrically opposite to the ones envisioned by leaders denounced as populists.

(...) a global desire among progressives for a shift away from the chauvinist, right-wing populism. (...) [New Zealand] cemented its position as a beacon of hope for those seeking an anti-Trump model of government led by charismatic women and functioning with an emphasis on inclusion and competence. (Article 52)

Aligned with Kramer and Langmann's argumentation (2020), the *NYT* recognized the challenges faced by professional journalism when dealing with rising right-wing populist movements. Considering itself as a neutral organization, the newspaper illustrated the difficulties of combating misinformation and competing with partisan outlets that thrive on spectacle and have no commitment to the truth. The *NYT* denounced the populist use of social media, especially *Facebook* and *Twitter*, as tools to spread misinformation and obtain popular support. Additionally, it voiced concern over the platforms' lack of accountability and overall positioning to favor traffic-generating content, even if filled with false claims. Ultimately, it argued that some form of content moderation could benefit democracy.

Journalists don't need to cover Trump wall to wall, but they also shouldn't feed liberal delusions about how easily the populism tide will be turned back. (...) we need a way for the kind of people who find the success of populism simply incomprehensible to see the world as it looks to the people voting for populists. (Article 8)

(...) partisan media outlets, which allow political leaders to spread disinformation to

their supporters with almost no pushback. (...) neutral media organizations, which struggle with how to present the daily onslaught of false claims from public figures. Combine that with the ubiquity of social media and what you end up with is a political conversation without consequences that favors the most outrageous voices. (**Article 37**)

[Facebook] still operates on the principle that what is popular is good. It still takes a truth-agnostic view of political speech. And it is still reluctant to take any actions that could be construed as partisan — even if those actions would lead to a healthier political debate or a fairer election. (**Article 35**)

Finally, the *NYT* provided concrete reasoning for the complexities behind the populist surge and advocated for addressing its causes rather than its effects. In more analytic pieces, the medium challenged mainstream assumptions and refrained from using one-size-fits-all explanations, providing readers with insight into issues that divide academia. The paper debated the concept's application, practical consequences and contradictions, highlighting its historical use by left-wing progressives like Martin Luther King Jr. and Franklin Roosevelt and right-wing reactionaries like Trump and Bolsonaro. Therefore, questioning the term's usefulness and distortion.

The rise of Donald Trump, and of figures like Viktor Orbán in Hungary and Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, has turned “populism” into a scare word. The core claim of populism is that only some of the people are really the people. Populism is a kind of heresy of democracy. (...) Is it really a sign of elitism and hostility to democracy to regard invocations of “the people,” whether by right-wing nationalists or left-wing activists, as dangerous invitations to exclude the not-people? (**Article 42**)

Like Brown and Mondon (2021), this analysis has equally perceived that the *NYT* offered readers complex analysis, helpful insight and ideas surrounding the complex and vast debate on populism, including its consequences, origins and relationship with the media. Nonetheless, as some articles engaged more meaningfully with the concept, most pieces ignored the term's complexity, abstained from providing definitions, and employed it as a loose signifier combined with other derogatory terms to stun readers and orient their conclusions. The following sections explore the frames created for Bolsonaro and Trump and analyze the rhetorical portrayal of populism.

4.2. Frame 1 - Threat to Liberal Democracy

Problem definition	Trump and Bolsonaro menace liberal democracy and its institutions.
Causal interpretation	Populist ideology attempts against the bastions of liberal democracy.
Moral evaluation	Negative.
Treatment recommendation	Strengthen democracy and its institutions to avoid populist takeover and dismantling. The US to reclaim its role as a leading liberal democracy.

The first and most salient frame was the presidents' inherent threat to liberal democracy and its institutions, which is vividly present in 40 of the 60 selected articles. The rise and election of Bolsonaro led the newspaper to draw several comparisons with Trump's rhetoric and agenda, offering readers a concrete notion of how similar movements were gaining strength worldwide. The *NYT* depicted right-wing populism as a menace to democratic governance, defining democracies as the system of institutions that safeguards minorities' rights and keeps those in power checked. Trump and Bolsonaro are portrayed as an affront to this system, and reporting correlated their populist ideology with the desire to pursue an idealized rule of the true people, thus willing to dismantle oversight institutions.

Jair Bolsonaro has exalted the country's military dictatorship, advocated torture and threatened to destroy, jail or drive into exile his political opponents. He has threatened to stack the Supreme Court and to deal with political foes by giving them the choice of extermination or exile. **(Article 6)**

Liberal democracy comes with features like independent courts and constitutional protections meant to check tribalist impulses and impose equality. **(Article 10)**

Mr. Bolsonaro railed against human rights and criticized black and indigenous Brazilians, women and the L.G.B.T. community. **(Article 14)**

In Western countries, white majorities are challenging rights long promised to minority groups and outsiders. Populist leaders, including President Trump, are clashing with institutions that they say oppose popular will. **(Article 17)**

The *NYT* illustrated the Brazilian socio-political scenario that consolidated Bolsonaro's

populist appeal and ascended him into the presidency. The medium differentiated Bolsonaro's victory by highlighting the contrasts with similar movements in the Global North. Therefore, explaining how and why similar right-wing populist movements rise within different contexts and offering reasoning for their intimate correlation. Additionally, the outlet sees the advancement of populism, authoritarianism and "post-fact" politics as an unprecedented challenge to democracy.

Mr. Bolsonaro, a strident populist, rose to power by tapping anger toward the Workers Party and presenting himself as their opposite — an outsider ready to take a wrecking ball to the political establishment and, through business-friendly policies, put the world's eighth-largest economy back on track. **(Article 6)**

(...) European and American whites who feared losing what they viewed as their special place in society to support populist leaders who promised to control immigrants and minorities, and led middle-class Brazilians to crave harsh policing of poor communities. **(Article 10)**

Mr. Trump's improbable rise benefited from a perfect storm of larger economic, social and demographic changes. His ascent also coincided with the rising anxieties and sense of dislocation. Echoes of Mr. Trump's nativist populism can be found in Prime Minister Boris Johnson of Britain's recent electoral victory, and in the ascent of the far-right President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil. **(Article 34)**

The *NYT* highlighted the populist war-like rhetoric to gather support, as leaders portray issues as national emergencies with clear enemies who must be faced. Consequently, populists perpetuate a state of conflict within society and exploit anger and distrust to consolidate their institutional takeover. The paper argued that the current liberal system is unprepared for said challenge, as it requires procedural observation, due evidence evaluation and dialogue to address problems. That presents an issue when dealing with immediate urgent situations such as violence and migration. Issues that "the establishment" has thus far failed to address become a full plate for populists. Bolsonaro and Trump are portrayed as strongman leaders who exploit these shortcomings to generate a nationalistic sense of urgency.

One way to understand the upheavals of the past decade, manifest in political populism and the surge in talk about "post-truth" and "fake news," is as the penetration of warlike mobilization and propaganda into our democracies. (...) the challenge is to find civil — not military — responses to social, economic and ecological problems that escalate at such a pace that they have come to feel like enemy combatants. **(Article 20)**

Reporting spared no effort to correlate denounced populists across the globe. Coverage highlighted how like-minded leaders align themselves whilst reducing ties with liberal democracies, as Trump distanced the US from the EU and supported Bolsonaro, Orbán and Duterte. Besides, articles demonstrated the strategies adopted by populists to curtail journalistic freedoms, suppress minority rights, coopt and rig institutions by claiming their actions are supported by popular will and face a corrupt unpopular establishment. In its comparisons, the *NYT* embraced the opportunity to consolidate large-scale conclusions about the *modus operandi* of populists, e.g., the undermining of oversight institutions by disseminating dissatisfaction with their functioning.

Mr. Orbán first criticized the press for being biased against him. Then he and his allies took over most of it, and switched to running stories that promote Mr. Orbán's populist agenda. (...) But the media is a special target for autocracies and waning democracies everywhere. (...) Trump regularly claims that articles critical of him are simply made up, and calls journalists the "enemy of the people." (**Article 11**)

Trump has portrayed Congress as opposing the will of the people. The ruling party of Poland, after portraying the judiciary as an obstacle to popular will, briefly tried to purge the Supreme Court. (...) Marginal figures like Jair Bolsonaro can win by promising to empower popular will over the establishment (**Article 17**)

The common thread here isn't just right-wing populism. It's contempt for the ideology of them before us: of the immigrant before the native-born; of the global or transnational interest before the national or local one; of racial or ethnic or sexual minorities before the majority; of the transgressive before the normal. (**Article 23**)

The illiberal populism of Donald Trump, Hungary's Viktor Orbán or Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro, each of whom was more or less fairly elected, entails the cynical and reckless use of the mechanisms of democracy to disenfranchise political minorities, politicize the state, stigmatize immigrants and other "outsiders," and diminish civil liberties. (**Article 31**)

Illiberal populists like Trump deliberately try to undermine the guardians of facts and the common good. Their message to their people is: Don't believe the courts, the independent civil servants or the fake news generators — only trust me, my words and my decisions. (**Article 46**)

The *NYT* also sought to frame Trump's policies and alliances with other right-wing populists as detrimental to America's interests, being contradictory and counterproductive to the nation's wellbeing, prosperity and credibility. For example, it argued that American foreign

policy acted *ad hoc* to sustain the president's ideology, therefore ignoring the realities and interests of Latin American countries, such as economic opportunity, corruption, security, and immigration.

We already see troubling signs that in pursuing this narrow focus on leftist autocrats, the Trump administration is embracing far-right-wing populist leaders. (...) Allying with far-right-wing governments with troubling positions on human rights undermines America's moral authority to call out the abuses of other governments. (**Article 14**)

A salient trend observed throughout the analysis was the paper's predisposition to paint Latin American institutions as immature and fragile, thus incapable of resisting populists' power-grab tactics. The paper contended that despite significant traumas, American institutions prevailed over Trump's attempts to subvert them. Reporting argued that Trump could not breach the military and law enforcement agencies essential to legitimize his unconstitutional perpetuation in power. Nonetheless, it maintains that populists elsewhere can be emboldened by Trump's efforts and may successfully undermine the rule of law to overcome institutional obstacles. In the case of Brazil, it noticed Bolsonaro's predisposition to seek a similar path in overturning the country's 2022 elections, given several corruption accusations and diminished popularity.

The question is whether Brazil's still adolescent democratic institutions can withstand a far-right assault. (**Article 9**)

Yet the shadow that Trump cast over democracy in the United States is a warning sign for countries with weaker institutions and more obsequious congresses, like Brazil, Mexico and El Salvador, where the formula of nationalist populism maintains appeal. (...) There is no shortage of aspiring caudillos in Latin America (**Article 55**)

The Trump name is a rallying cry for Brazil's new right and his efforts to undermine the U.S. electoral system appear to have inspired and emboldened Mr. Bolsonaro and his supporters. (**Article 59**)

Furthermore, the *NYT* reflected on the meaning and nature of populism and its relationship to liberalism. Despite having done so, it argued that to characterize Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren as populists would be a mistake since they do not pose a threat to the liberal order, and their agenda echoes that of former historical presidents such as Roosevelt. Regardless of their disdain for the "free market", left-leaning candidates in the US did not chant a segregational view of society, as has the Republican party captured by President Trump. The paper offered a historical contextualization to demonstrate how illiberal conservatives

penetrated the political apparatus and pursued its dismantling.

In [Roosevelt's] day, as in ours, the rich vacuumed up almost all the value produced by the economy. Does pointing that out make you a populist? Does denying that claim, or endorsing the virtues of gross inequality, mean that you are not a populist? The thought is absurd. (...) Today, paradoxically, it is not liberals but conservatives who endanger liberalism. (...) President Reagan also welcomed into the party extremists and conservative evangelicals who thought about politics in far more absolute terms. Over time, those groups took over the host body of the Republicans, leaving us with an illiberal party that represents half the country. **(Article 31)**

Finally, in the aftermath of Biden's election, the *NYT* discussed the future of right-wing populist movements across the globe. It entertained the notion of how Trump's loss would affect his counterparts, arguing that political grievances that foment the ideology remain very much alive and influential, even in the US. The paper signalled that despite signalling retreat, other populist movements are independent of Trump and capable of retaining power in his absence. The outlet marked Biden's most significant challenge as addressing the causes that led to the rise of right-wing populism and encouraged the newly elected president to reclaim US primacy as a bastion of democracy and its global supporter.

The economic, social and political grievances that fed populist and xenophobic movements in many countries are still alive, and indeed, may be reinforced by the ravages of the coronavirus pandemic. (...) experts point out that the populist and far-right movements in Germany and other European countries always had their own roots that were distinct and predated the Anglo-American variety. **(Article 51)**

[Biden] will have to repair the damage this brush with right-wing populism has inflicted on the country's democratic institutions, and stave off its ideologues and enablers. (...) His attempt to heal America's divisions must be part of an international project to restore democracy. And nowhere is that as important as in Latin America. (...) Mr. Biden must first lead by example by re-establishing a functional democracy at home. **(Article 55)**

The *NYT* portrayed Trump and Bolsonaro as fundamentally opposed to liberal democratic values. The newspaper orients the notion that populist ideology is antagonistic to democratic governance that safeguards minorities and protects oversight institutions, denouncing populist leaders as ultimately harmful to their constituents. Their policies, the outlet contends, will fail to address current geopolitical issues and will merely aggravate the longstanding existing grievances within society. Additionally, coverage explained different

socioeconomic contexts that led to both leaders' elections and attempted to demonstrate the appeal of populists and their strategy (e.g., war-like rhetoric). In terms of distinctions, the *NYT* perceives the populist threat to be much more harmful to Brazil (and Latin America), given the immaturity of its institutions, whilst praising the US for its resilience in dealing with Trump's attempt to overcome elections. The medium also presented self-criticism on how populism has been misinterpreted to denounce figures favouring a redistributive economic agenda, indicating a shift towards a more homogenous definition of the term focused on illiberalism but failing to distinguish how left-wing manifestations occur. Finally, despite suffering retraction, the *NYT* claimed that populist ideology remains a constant threat to democracies and advised President Biden to strengthen democracy at home and abroad, perceiving the US as a fundamental leader who must immediately reclaim its role. Overall, *NYT* argued that populist ideology drives direct assaults on democratic governance and navigates readers to recognize the causes and effects of the ideology and oppose them.

4.3.Frame 2 – Threat to effective Climate Action

Problem definition	Trump and Bolsonaro fail to promote effective climate mitigation action.
Causal interpretation	Populists are skeptical of scientific reasoning and turn climate change into a political dispute.
Moral evaluation	Negative.
Treatment recommendation	Public awareness, effective environmental action, civil society activism and international pressure.

The second observed frame portrayed both presidents as climate change deniers unwilling to implement policies to curb greenhouse gas emissions, restrain deforestation and accelerate the transition to renewables. This particular storyline appeared in a period of raising climate awareness when Trump and Bolsonaro signalled their intention to leave the Paris Agreement. Simultaneously, extreme weather events manifested more frequently, leading to youth protests and mobilization of the international community. In coverage, populism is depicted as a corroborating feature of the presidents' inadequate climate response, international isolation and tendency to politicize purely scientific issues. Additionally, the *NYT* presented

subject matter experts to debunk leaders' responses and policies. Hence, informing readers about the dangers of perpetuating the status quo vis-à-vis the environment.

[Trump's] isolation is not just from the world: In California, New York, Massachusetts and other states, governments and companies are pushing ahead with regulations and technological innovations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Experts say it is no substitute for the world's largest economy, and second-largest emitter of carbon dioxide, turning its back on the fight. (Article 3)

Mr. Trump has denied the scientific reality of climate change and taken aggressive steps that will increase emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gases — despite unequivocal scientific evidence that those pollutants are warming the planet to dangerous levels. (...) In Brazil, the far-right populist President-elect Jair Bolsonaro campaigned on a vow of pulling out of the Paris Agreement. (Article 13)

As the Trump administration denies established climate science (...), European leaders have energetically stepped in to take up the mantle of leadership. (Article 27)

In addition to being framed as a climate skeptic, Bolsonaro's coverage extensively highlighted the setbacks for the Amazon and its indigenous communities. The newspaper perceives the forest as "the planet's lungs" and contends Bolsonaro threatens its stability by reversing successful protection policies and dismantling the control organizations responsible for Brazil's environmental soft power. Also, the newspaper tied Bolsonaro to predatory mining and agriculture business interests that sought fewer constraints to explore the region. These interests endanger the survival of indigenous communities, which the medium conveyed as essential to the proper functioning of democracies, and to counter authoritarian developments, preserve the environment and deter predatory economic interests.

Should he reach the presidential palace, one loser will be the environment, and specifically the Amazon rain forests, sometimes known as the lungs of the earth (...). [Bolsonaro] has raised the prospect of scrapping the Environment Ministry and stopping the creation of indigenous reserves — all this in a country until recently praised for its leadership on protection of the environment. (Article 4)

If there is hope for the rainforest, and for countries where authoritarians threaten democracy and progressive agendas, it lies in the determination and power of civil society activists like Sônia Guajajara. (...) Wiser leaders than Mr. Bolsonaro would look for ways to expand economic development while also respecting the indigenous tribes and recognizing the Amazon's irreplaceable contributions to halting climate change. (Article 21)

(...) deforestation has increased sharply across Brazil, including in indigenous territories. Mr. Bolsonaro has pledged to make it easier for industries to gain access to protected areas, arguing that native communities are in control of unreasonably vast areas that contain enormous wealth. (Article 26)

Moreover, the *NYT* argued that Bolsonaro and other populist leaders deliberately endanger environmental defenders by subverting legal systems to label them as terrorist organizations. Populists like Duterte and Bolsonaro see environmental defenders as enemies of sovereignty and development and develop policies to curtail oversight institutions and criminalize NGOs and other civil society activist bodies.

Using, or misusing, laws and the courts, governments and industries, intent on driving indigenous people or activists away, criminalize resistance or proclaim them to be “terrorists,” choking off their funding and tying them up in costly legal battles. (...) Mr. Duterte and Mr. Bolsonaro were two of the new breed of populist leaders Global Witness identified as contributing to worsening the plight of those who defend the land. (Article 25)

The forest fires in the Amazon in 2019 quickly gained international repercussion, with foreign leaders pressuring the Brazilian government to present plans for mitigating the situation at the risk of economic retaliation. As Bolsonaro belligerently engaged with international authorities, especially French President Macron, international outrage grew over the rising deforestation. The *NYT* argued that the “far-right” populist dismantled Brazil’s environmental policies and turned his back on the situation, leaving European leaders without other alternatives than threatening the continuance of the EU-Mercosur trade agreement. Furthermore, the newspaper portrayed this change in the Brazilian stance towards the environment as a shock, since the country had recently acted as a pioneer for economic development and environmental protection.

As a chorus of condemnation intensified, Brazil braced for the prospect of punitive measures that could severely damage an economy that is already sputtering after a brutal recession and the country’s far-right populist president faced a withering reckoning. (Article 26)

Mr. Macron has emerged as one of the world leaders most critical of Mr. Bolsonaro, a far-right populist and climate change skeptic. Scrutiny of the Brazilian leader’s policies has intensified as international attention has turned to the devastating fires ravaging the rainforest. (Article 28)

The *NYT* argued that European retaliation towards Brazil fomented Bolsonaro's far-right populist response, facilitating the inflammation of his supporter base by denouncing "European Imperialism" and media sensationalism that threatens the nation's sovereignty. Nevertheless, coverage argued that plain rejection of international aid would also endanger Brazil's economy, and that Bolsonaro's policies impacted foreign investors and could derail the interests of his powerful agribusiness allies.

Mr. Bolsonaro blamed the international crisis on media outlets that reported on the fire, on those who oppose him for not wanting to protect more indigenous land, and on France(...). These international demonstrations of concern are, in reality, attempts to infringe on Brazil's rights over its own territory, he said. (Article 29)

Some Brazilians are growing concerned about economic losses from the crisis. Norway and Germany have suspended contributions to the Amazon Fund (...). And Swedish and Norwegian pension funds have started investigating whether international companies with investments in the Amazon were taking enough action to save the rainforest. (...) the crisis could lead to a boycott of the country's exports. (Article 29)

Furthermore, the newspaper explored the idiosyncrasies of populist ideology, arguing its tendency to turn matters into political disputes with winners and losers by mixing issues that should be bipartisan, due to their scientific consensus, with other topics that raise greater "passions" such as abortion rights, mask mandates. This, in the *NYT*'s perspective, means that issues become polluted with other unrelated debates, affecting purposeful discussions and solutions.

To put it differently, when everything is politics, everything is just about power. There is no center, only sides; no truth, only versions; no facts, only a contest of wills. If you believe that climate change is real, it must be because someone paid you off with a research grant. (...) if you believe in oil, gas and coal, you are also supposed to oppose abortion and face masks. And if you believe in solar, wind and hydro, you are presumed to be pro-abortion rights and pro-face mask. (Article 46)

Finally, in the aftermath of Biden's elections, the *NYT* encouraged the new president to recede Trump's policies and reclaim America's leading role in the world, especially in climate change action, meaning to create effective policies that deter global warming and deforestation by applying economic sanctions and prohibitions, as well as encouraging the transition to renewables. According to the outlet, Trump gave Bolsonaro's environment devastation policies legitimacy, and greater scrutiny from Biden can force the Brazilian to revisit his stance.

“A change in U.S. policy can help to postpone and even reverse the tipping point of the Amazon rainforest,” Natalie Unterstell, a climate policy expert. **(Article 49)**

With the United States no longer led by someone who thinks climate change is a hoax, Mr. Bolsonaro can expect to encounter much more pressure. Brazil, in the words of the political scientist Oliver Stuenkel, may soon have to “face down a joint U.S.-European alliance threatening to isolate Brazil economically over its failure to protect the world’s largest tropical forest”. **(Article 53)**

In framing Trump and Bolsonaro as climate skepticals, the *NYT* contends populists denounce climate-sensitive policies as elite plots that threaten national sovereignty and oppose the true people’s interest. Aligned with Huber (2020), the paper indicates that populists condemn an absence of representation in expert-led areas and reject their veracity given their anti-elitist behavior and politicization of scientific fact. Additionally, coverage has given preeminence to the deterioration of the Amazon rainforest, as it sees the forest as necessary for the maintenance of human existence, framing Bolsonaro’s actions as unethical, anti-democratic and world endangering. Consequently, it encouraged Biden turnaround Trump’s policies to pursue US primacy in climate action, investing in clean energy sources and trade policies that ensure environmental protection.

4.4.Frame 3 – Threat to Covid-19 Containment

Problem definition	Trump and Bolsonaro are incapable of addressing the severity of the Covid-19 pandemic.
Causal interpretation	Populists are unwilling to address the severity of the pandemic and often use it to cement their grip on power.
Moral evaluation	Negative.
Treatment recommendation	Adopt effective, science-abiding containment strategies.

The final observed frame in reporting referred to the Covid-19 pandemic and its effects worldwide. With rising infection rates and the crisis gaining global repercussions, the *NYT* correlated Trump and Bolsonaro’s pandemic response to their populist character, attributing the ineffectiveness of policies to the Manichaeian worldview and unwillingness to abide by

scientific expertise. Reporting indicated that populist leaders' policies facilitated the virus's rapid spread. The *NYT* reiterates that “us vs them” rhetoric, where all matters become a political conflict, ignores primary scientific evidence and promotes ill-thought-out responses that have increased infection and mortality rates. To orient that notion, the paper brought in the opinion of political and medical experts and demonstrated specific examples within countries to facilitate readers' conclusions.

The four large countries where coronavirus cases have recently been increasing fastest are Brazil, the United States, Russia and Britain. They are all run by populist male leaders who cast themselves as anti-elite and anti-establishment. (...)all four subscribe to versions of what Daniel Ziblatt (...) calls “radical right illiberal populism.” Illiberal populists tend to reject the opinions of scientists and promote conspiracy theories. **(Article 38)**

It is unfortunate that the coronavirus has struck during an era of populism. Across the Americas, Presidents López Obrador, Donald Trump and Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil have minimized the danger of the virus and blamed enemies for it. **(Article 39)**

The reason Trump has utterly failed to manage the Covid-19 pandemic is that he finally met a force he could not discredit and deflect by turning it into politics — Mother Nature. She is impenetrable to politics because all she consists of is chemistry, biology and physics. **(Article 46)**

The newspaper associated the populist ideology with a “strongman” style of politics that minimized the dangers of the virus by portraying it as hysteria, thus derailing effective government action. Populist leaders whose countries had first been spared from early infections validated their administrations and political style. However, when infections and mortality rose, they continued to underplay the virus' severity, even when presidents themselves were infected, doubling down on their science denial rhetoric.

The virus surges in regions where populist leaders thought they'd been spared. The pandemic's new direction — away from Western countries — is bad news for strongmen and populists who once reaped political points by vaunting low infection rates as evidence of the virtues of their leadership. **(Article 40)**

In Brazil, the total death toll surpassed 32,000 on Thursday, with 1,349 deaths in a single day, dealing a further blow to the populist president, Jair Bolsonaro, who has continued to minimize the threat. **(Article 41)**

Mr. Trump is not the first world leader to be stricken. Prime Minister Boris Johnson of

Britain and President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil both were infected — drawing an eerie link between three populist politicians whose countries have been particularly hard hit by the pandemic. (Article 47)

Furthermore, the *NYT* displayed populist policies as motivated merely by political beliefs, proving disastrous for national health systems and being more detrimental to the minorities rejected from the “true people”. The example of Brazil’s government removing Cuban doctors with Trump’s endorsement stands out, with results seen with more significant mortality within indigenous communities. Additionally, the newspaper contended that populists stressed the economic aspect of the crisis whilst neglecting its health hazards when developing their response policies. Meanwhile, it continuously advocated for the belief in scientific consensus and containment as the most effective policy to restore the economy and public health systems, bringing specialists or quoting specific studies for credibility effect.

An academic effort to track countries’ responses to the virus has shown that a delay in government reaction allows the virus to spread much faster. (...) Often, leaders who responded more slowly have cited the need to prioritize economic growth. But the trade-offs between the economy and public health may not actually exist, scientists and economists say: The fastest route to economic normalcy involves controlling the spread of the virus. (article 38)

The Pan-American Health Organization oversaw the Cuban doctors in Brazil and promoted their work as a model. Indigenous communities in the remote Amazon basin have been hardest hit. Compared with other Brazilians in the Amazon basin, Indigenous people have been 10 times as likely to contract the virus. (Article 48)

The paper argued that despite clear evidence of Covid-19’s severity, Trump and Bolsonaro, alongside other populist leaders, continued to mock science, adhere to conspiracy theories, and prescribe untested medications, derailing effective strategies that emphasized lockdowns and vaccinations and mask mandates. Moreover, coverage argued that Bolsonaro went to great lengths to provide “scientific” evidence to justify his policies by replacing unaligned staff with more complacent “experts” who supported his beliefs. It is essential to highlight that such portrayal aligns with the argumentation brought by Eberl, Huber and Greussing (2021), as populists distrust political and scientific institutions, hence negatively relating COVID-19 to opposition-led “plots”. The *NYT* sustains that more robust democratic governances are better equipped to dodge conspiracies and promote science-based responses

Populists don’t like experts — or relying on experts — and an anti-expertise response

to the new coronavirus is deadly. (...) countries with really robust governance systems will be the ones that do best at the end of the day. **(Article 38)**

President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil has repeatedly promoted unproven coronavirus treatments, and implied that the virus is less dangerous than experts say. President Trump, too, has repeatedly pushed unproven drugs, despite warnings from scientists. Mr. Trump has accused perceived enemies of seeking to “inflamm” the coronavirus “situation” to hurt him. **(Article 45)**

Mr. Bolsonaro has made hydroxychloroquine the centerpiece of Brazil’s pandemic response, despite a medical consensus that the drug is ineffective and even dangerous. (...) But when two health ministers refused to support the drug, Mr. Bolsonaro replaced them with a loyal military officer, while Dr. Yamaguchi became his most trusted adviser. **(Article 48)**

The articles covering the pandemic sought to demonstrate to readers the appeal of conspiracies and the reasons why democratically elected leaders actively propel them to increase support. The outlet argued that unpopular governments seeking to provide excuses for failures spare no effort to convince electorates of elaborate plots designed to undermine the will of the true people. Moreover, it argued that the promotion of conspiracies increases fear and societal dichotomy and promotes newer, more radical conspiracies that ultimately lead to the rise of populism.

The conspiracy theories all carry a common message: The only protection comes from possessing the secret truths that “they” don’t want you to hear. (...) Few things tighten the bonds of “us” like rallying against “them,” especially foreigners and minorities, both frequent scapegoats of coronavirus rumors and much else before now. (...) Medical conspiracies have been a growing problem for years. So has distrust of authority, a major driver of the world’s slide into fringe populism. **(Article 45)**

Aligned with Frame 1, the *NYT* correlated the effects of the pandemic with democratic retrenchment, arguing that leaders used the virus politically to undermine checks and balances, curtail the opposition and dismantle oversight bodies. The paper claimed that this strategy is not proprietary to right-wing populists, but widespread across the political spectrum, especially in Latin America, where the pandemic exacerbated the challenges to welfare systems and deepened inequality. Coverage continuously argued that the region’s weaker democratic institutions are more susceptible to a hostile takeover by populist autocrats, resulting in a prolonged economic crisis which would slow growth and increase corruption and human rights abuses. Attempting to portray a singular picture of democratic upheaval in Latin America, the

NYT contrasted Obrador and Bolsonaro, whom the paper depicted as left and right-wing populists. However, it failed to address the specific characteristics of left and right movements or why they differ, leaving the reader with a half comparison that highlighted similarities but did not address differences. Additionally, the outlet placed the US as a former bastion of democracy and a guiding pillar for Latin America. However, the election of Trump altered that reality, facilitating dismantling and appropriation and paving the way for institutional setbacks in the region.

Leaders ranging from the center-right to the far left have used the crisis as justification to extend their time in office, weaken oversight of government actions and silence critics — actions that under different circumstances would be described as authoritarian and antidemocratic but that now are being billed as lifesaving measures to curb the spread of the disease. (...) Adding to these challenges, democracy in Latin America has also lost a champion in the United States, which had played an important role in promoting democracy after the end of the Cold War by financing good governance programs and calling out authoritarian abuses. **(Article 44)**

Moreover, some of these leaders are likely to be able to exploit the aftereffects of the pandemic — from chronic unemployment and insecurity to soaring public debt and racial tensions — even if they themselves worsened the problems by playing down the threat of the virus and politicizing the public-health response. **(article 51)**

Among Latin America's most notable victims of populism, whether from the left or the right, are Brazil and Mexico, the region's largest democracies. In Brazil, the far-right president, Jair Bolsonaro has encouraged militias and keyboard warriors to attack his adversaries. (...) In Mexico, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, a leftist, also tends to exploit the emotional bond with his followers to incite them against his critics and to discredit the press. Its purpose is to discredit the facts and destroy the idea of truth to prevent a collective consensus on reality and to make power even more inscrutable. **(Article 55)**

Lastly, to contrast populist leaders' response to the virus, the newspaper provided examples of countries that led successful containment policies, framing them as diametrically opposite to the strategy used by Bolsonaro, Trump and other populists, orienting readers to associate effective strategies with those deployed liberal democratic governments with solid oversight institutions and belief in science. The *NYT* correlated failed containment policies with the decline in populists' popularity observed in Europe, and argued that the collapses experienced under strongman type leaders repaved the way for belief in traditional politics and

the restoration of centrist movements' credibility.

The flip side of the pattern involving illiberal populists is that countries run by women appear to have been more successful in fighting the virus. **(Article 38)**

In the few democratic strongholds in Latin America, such as Uruguay and Costa Rica, leaders responded to the pandemic with efficiency and transparency, boosting public trust in the government. **(Article 44)**

The leaders of Germany, Sweden and South Korea asserted just the opposite, saying: “No, there are scientific facts independent of politics and there is the common good, and we will bow to those facts and we will serve the common good with a public health strategy.” **(article 46)**

Half of Europe's right-wing populist parties saw their support decline under the pandemic, according to a study by Cas Mudde and Jakub Wondreys. (...) The populists who indulged anti-lockdown and anti-vaccine sentiments suffered the most in polls. **(Article 57)**

By framing Trump and Bolsonaro as incapable of handling a health crisis, the *NYT* spared no expense in associating the populist trait as a defining factor that impedes the Covid containment. Populists either minimize the threats and ignite support bases or use the crisis to continue their authoritarian and anti-democratic consolidation of power. Recurrently, the *NYT* sees Latin America as a region with a greater risk of succumbing to populist weaponization of the pandemic. Without duly distinguishing different political landscapes and movements' characteristics, the paper clusters “left-and-right” leaders under the same rhetoric denouncement of populism, leaving readers with foggy notions of the political phenomenon. Simultaneously it sees the US as responsible for undoing the malaises left by Trump's administration, urging President Biden to rekindle ties with former allies and concentrate on expanding democratic, science abiding governance. Lastly, the coverage orients readers to associate populism with science denial, power-hungry and ineffective policies and offers “democratic” and efficient counterexamples to illustrate the prosperous path.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:

This research sought to illuminate the relationship between acclaimed liberal news outlets and their depiction of populism in the coverage of right-wing reactionary ideologues. As per the literature, the signifier populist is used as a rhetorical mechanism to discredit and denounce political foes and their reasoning, resulting in an inconsistent use by publications without due consideration for the academic debate behind the notion. The research analyzed how the *NYT* framed Donald Trump and Jair Bolsonaro, two denounced right-wing populists who are portrayed as byproducts of the same recent global political phenomenon. Moreover, the analysis intended to understand if the medium's interpretation varied for leaders in different geographic socioeconomic environments, i.e., to verify the existence of biases or inconsistencies that shaped the reporting. As a result, the investigation demonstrated how the *NYT* influences the political debate via agenda-setting and framing, constructing a narrative that navigates readers towards a specific comprehension of the populist phenomenon. The following sections discuss the observations, present the limitations and offer a path for future research.

5.1. Research Interpretation

As demonstrated throughout the analysis, the *NYT* has denounced Bolsonaro, Trump and other leaders as right-wing populists, given their characteristics and policies that aim to marshal an idealized people against anti-popular elites, social minorities, migrants, the international community and others. Partially, articles focused directly on the debate surrounding populism, offering the reader the complex realities of the phenomenon and even presenting self-criticism of failures in reporting. Nevertheless, populism remained predominantly a secondary aspect in the articles, being rarely defined and loosely employed for discredit and impact. The populist label was often deployed with other attributes to consolidate the negative portrayal of these figures and the ideas they represent, e.g., illiberal, autocratic, authoritarian, far-right and antidemocratic. These recurrent rhetorical structures merge the conceptualization of populism with reactionary, economic, cultural and religious political agendas associated with the far-right. This common association frequently appeared in the analyzed pieces, bestowing a sense of interchangeability between populism and the far-right, as the medium rarely exposed its generic definition of populism. Furthermore, whilst attempting to distance the label populist from redistributive economic policies associated with

left-wing politicians such as Bernie Sanders, coverage simultaneously denounced leftist populism in the figure of Mexican President Obrador. The newspaper listed the similarities between both presidents, being illiberal and authoritarian tendencies, but did not elucidate the differences that led to distinct qualifiers. These contrasting pieces generate inconsistency, as the paper simultaneously refrains from qualifying leftist politicians as populists and denounces left-wing populism without offering readers any reasoning. This rhetoric comes at the cost of discourse integrity, creating discrepancies that are unlikely to be overlooked by readers.

Moreover, the analysis has demonstrated that despite offering concrete regional socioeconomic backgrounds that led to the election of both presidents, the *NYT* sustains a perception of inferiority towards the countries of the Global South and, more perceivably, Latin America. The medium recurrently portrays the region's institutional maturity and resilience as fragile and therefore more susceptible to the maneuvers of power-hungry populists. This logic corroborates the American paternalist outlook and justifies American interference in the region as indispensable to prosperity and stability. The same rhetoric serves as validation for advocating the restoration of American credibility under President Biden, encouraging direct engagement with countries facing the same threats Donald Trump presented for the US, however, at much greater risk. Overall, populism acted as a derogatory and reinforcing attribute designed to indicate an inherent perception of the political reality that attempts against the prerogatives of liberal democracy, turns matters into political confrontations, foments distrust in scientific consensus, and propels conspiracy theories, ultimately providing negative results for society as a whole.

5.2. Limitations and future research

The *NYT* presented itself as a strong advocate for liberal democracies, political minorities, scientific evidence and addressing problems with inclusive and purposeful debates. These principles, the paper conveys, are threatened by populists, and coverage frames populists invariably as a menace. The tendency was observed throughout the analysis and included other significant right-wing populist leaders, indicating a pattern for the newspaper's coverage. Given the nature and significance of the *NYT*, it is expected that other outlets with similar editorial lines follow the same logic of populist depiction. Nevertheless, future research should be conducted to verify the existence of the same rhetoric and biases, including American exceptionalism and institutional inferiority of the Global South. Moreover, Global South

outlets must also be analyzed to see how their perspective varies compared to renowned western news organizations.

Given the recent nationalism and conservatism upsurge globally, this research has focused on right-wing populism, as it became the predominant variation in liberal media. Therefore, populism's characterization shifted towards a conceptualization aligned with far-right movements and distanced from leftist ones. Nevertheless, subsequent research may attest to how left variations suffered transformation in coverage, as it simultaneously embraces some left-wing movements as democratic and condemns others as equally populist. Finally, the objective of this research was not to provide a normative interpretation of the rationale behind the portrayal, nor to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy undertaken by the *NYT* in their reporting, but merely to ascertain traits and patterns that corroborate the depiction of populism. Future research may attest to the consequences of reporting among electorates and populist movements. This inaugural research offers fertile ground for future investigations that seek to expand the knowledge of the media's characterization of populism as a political phenomenon and its influence on societal perception.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - List of selected articles

Number	Title	Author	Publication Date
1	Brazil Flirts With a Return to the Dark Days	Carol Pires	24-08-2018
2	Far-Right Candidate Jair Bolsonaro Widens Lead in Brazil's Presidential Race	Ernesto Londoño and Shasta Darlington	05-10-2018
3	Dire Climate Warning Lands With a Thud on Trump's Desk	Mark Landler and Coral Davenport	08-10-2018
4	Brazil's Sad Choice	NY Times Editorial Board	21-10-2018
5	Caetano Veloso: Dark Times Are Coming for My Country	Caetano Veloso	24-10-2018
6	Jair Bolsonaro Wins Brazil's Presidency, in a Shift to the Far Right	Ernesto Londoño and Shasta Darlington	28-10-2018
7	Brazil Election: How Jair Bolsonaro Turned Crisis Into Opportunity	Ernesto Londoño and Manuela Andreoni	29-10-2018
8	Trump Can't Unite Us. Can Anyone?	Frank Bruni and Ross Douthat	30-10-2018
9	Brazil Lurches to the Right	NY Times Editorial Board	30-10-2018
10	The Weaknesses in Liberal Democracy That May Be Pulling It Apart	Max Fisher	01-11-2018
11	The News Is Bad in Hungary	Pamela Druckerman	01-11-2018

12	4 Ways World Leaders Have Echoed Trump's Words and Policies	Megan Specia	04-11-2018
13	How Trump Is Ensuring That Greenhouse Gas Emissions Will Rise	Coral Davenport and Lisa Friedman	26-11-2018
14	Trump Tries Old Tricks With Latin America	Christopher Sabatini	28-11-2018
15	What Happens When a Holocaust Memorial Plays Host to Autocrats	Matti Friedman	08-12-2018
16	Jair Bolsonaro Sworn In as Brazil's President, Cementing Rightward Shift	Ernesto Londoño	01-01-2019
17	When More Democracy Isn't More Democratic	Max Fisher and Amanda Taub	21-01-2019
18	Brazil's Bolsonaro Is the Face of Populism at the Davos Forum	Mark Landler	22-01-2019
19	Spain's Far-Right Vox Party Sees Breakout Moment in New Election	Raphael Minder	16-02-2019
20	Everything Is War and Nothing Is True	William Davies	23-02-2019
21	Brazil's New President Threatens 'the Lungs of the Planet'	Carol Giacomo	19-03-2019
22	For Trump, Brazil's	Michael D. Shear and	19-03-2019

	President Is Like Looking in the Mirror	Maggie Haberman	
23	How Trump Wins Next Year	Bret Stephens	24-05-2019
24	Enough With Crumbs — I Want the Cake	Mona Eltahawy	28-05-2019
25	In the Fight to Save the Planet, Its Defenders Are Being Killed	NY Times Editorial Board	01-08-2019
26	As Amazon Fires Become Global Crisis, Brazil's President Reverses Course	Ernesto Londoño, Manuela Andreoni and Letícia Casado	23-08-2019
27	As the Amazon Burns, Europe Seizes Title of Climate Champion	Norimitsu Onishi	24-08-2019
28	G7 Highlights on Final Day of Meetings: Iran, Climate Change and China Trade	Peter Baker	26-08-2019
29	Brazil Angrily Rejects Millions in Amazon Aid Pledged at G7, Then Accepts British Aid	Manuela Andreoni	27-08-2019
30	Pope Francis Arrives in Mozambique, With Renewed Focus on Poverty and Climate	Jason Horowitz	04-09-2019
31	Can the Left Save Liberalism From Trump?	James Traub	17-10-2019
32	Vox and the Rise of the Extreme Right in	Martín Caparrós	13-11-2019

	Spain		
33	From Friends to Frenemies? Trump's Relationships With World Leaders	Megan Specia	03-12-2019
34	The 2010s were the End of Normal	Michiko Kakutani	27-12-2019
35	Buckle Up for Another Facebook Election	Kevin Roose	10-01-2020
36	Bernie Sanders wants to change your mind	NY Times Editorial Board	13-01-2020
37	The Fog of Rudy	Jonathan Mahler	15-01-2020
38	Where the Virus Is Growing Most: Countries With 'Illiberal Populist' Leaders	David Leonhardt and Lauren Leatherby	06-02-2020
39	Mexico, the Coronavirus and the Hugging President	Ioan Grillo	23-03-2020
40	Surging Coronavirus Caseloads Put Strongmen on the Back Foot	Rachel Abrams and others	04-06-2020
41	Coronavirus Rips Into Regions Previously Spared	Declan Walsh	04-06-2020
42	The Fight Over the Future of the Democratic Party	James Traub	14-07-2020
43	Trump's Wag-the-Dog War	Thomas L. Friedman	21-07-2020
44	Latin America Is Facing a 'Decline of	Anatoly Kurmanaev	29-07-2020

	Democracy' Under the Pandemic		
45	Why Coronavirus Conspiracy Theories Flourish. And Why It Matters.	Max Fisher	04-08-2020
46	Beirut's Blast Is a Warning for America	Thomas L. Friedman	09-08-2020
47	Trump Tests Positive for Coronavirus, and the World Shudders	Mark Landler	02-10-2020
48	HOW TRUMP AND BOLSONARO BROKE LATIN AMERICA'S COVID-19 DEFENSES	David D. Kirkpatrick and José María León Cabrera	27-10-2020
49	A Transfixed World Awaits What's Next in America	Mark Landler and Damien Cave	04-11-2020
50	Twitter Clamped Down on Trump, but Army of Accounts Spread His Message	Kellen Browning, Ben Decker and Jacob Silver	04-11-2020
51	Does Trump's Defeat Signal the Start of Populism's Decline?	Mark Landler and Melissa Eddy	10-11-2020
52	With Progressive Politics on March in New Zealand, Maori Minister Blazes New Trails	Damien Cave	15-11-2020
53	Trump Lost. Bolsonaro Can't Get Over It.	Vanessa Barbara	08-12-2020

54	Brexit Is Finally Done, but It Already Seems Out of Date	Mark Landler	24-12-2020
55	Hola, President Biden. Latin America Has a Message for You.	Boris Muñoz	23-01-2021
56	Former U.S. Climate Leaders Press Biden on Amazon Deforestation	Lisa Friedman	29-01-2021
57	As Populists Decline, the Center-Left Sees Hints of a Comeback	Max Fisher	17-09-2021
58	Brazil's President Bans Social Networks From Removing Some Posts	Jack Nicas	09-10-2021
59	The Bolsonaro-Trump Connection Threatening Brazil's Elections"	Jack Nicas	11-11-2021
60	Biden Is Selling Democracy Short	Jan-Werner Müller	09-12-2021

Appendix 2 – List of identified frames per article

Article Number	Frame 1 - Threat to Liberal Democracy	Frame 2 - Threat to Climate Action	Frame 3 - Threat to Pandemic Deterrence	Additional - Contributes to the notion of populism
1	X			
2	X			
3		X		
4	X	X		
5	X			
6	X			
7	X			
8				X
9	X			
10	X			
11	X			
12	X			
13		X		
14	X			
15	X			
16	X			
17	X			
18	X	X		
19				X
20	X			
21	X	X		
22	X			
23	X			
24	X			
25	X	X		
26		X		
27		X		
28		X		
29		X		
30		X		
31	X			
32				X
33				X
34	X			
35	X			
36	X	X		
37				X
38	X		X	
39			X	
40	X		X	
41	X		X	
42	X			
43	X			
44	X		X	
45			X	
46	X	X	X	
47			X	
48	X		X	
49		X		
50				X
51	X		X	
52				X
53		X	X	
54	X			
55	X			
56		X		
57	X		X	
58	X		X	
59	X			
60	X			