



# Media Matters

**I**t goes without saying: Mainstream media are hardly without blame when it comes to the passionate partisan distrust now swamping the so-called news, and the “truths” it reports, in slippery muck of moral relativism. As the world burns, *Good Morning America* pimps the latest fad diet as though such ethereal concerns stood equal footing with weapons of mass destruction.

For decades now, our major news sources have been drifting away from earnestness and investigative wherewithal and into the über-commercialized realm of sensationalism, crowd-pleasing and ratings cowardice, while on the flip side the general population, perhaps lacking superior critical faculties, is seized by a kind of sensory overload that somehow puts facts and fiction toe to toe.

No wonder Donald Trump can shout “fake news” over a story critical of his executive nonsense, and half the country replies: “Yup, ’nuff said.”

Truth itself is contested ground now — not philosophical truth with a capital-T but simply the facts of what did and did not happen — and verification has succumbed to an infantile process of spewing unsubstantiated insults back and forth until a sort of benumbed and benighted superstition sets in. Feelings become facts, impervious to debate.

This allows our current commander-in-chief to make a terrifying offer to the American people: Forget the news, and trust only me. You can almost hear Orwell turning over in his grave. — *Rick Levin*