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A viral theory of post-truth

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There is an ecology of bad ideas, just as there is an ecology of weeds, and it is characteristic of the system that basic error propagates itself.

—Gregory Bateson, *Steps Towards an Ecology of Mind* (1972)

Towards a theory of viral modernity (Michael A. Peters)

In evolutionary biology there is a strong hypothesis that holds that viruses may have been free-living organisms that as parasites were the precursors of life. Their diversity runs into trillions and unlike all other biological organisms some have RNA genomes and some have DNA genomes; some are single-stranded and other are double-stranded genomes; they can only self-replicate within a host cell; and, none contain ribosomes and therefore cannot make proteins. Among the three main theories of where they came from and whether they are alive, one recent account holds that viruses either predate bacteria, archaea, or eukaryotes or coevolved with host cells (Koonin and Martin 2005), but while they can evolve rapidly because of their short generation times and large population sizes, viruses cannot reproduce by themselves (*Nature*, 2020).

The social history of viruses and its impact on the human species began during our evolution and epidemics have been recorded as early as Neolithic times when human beings began to lead sedentary lives in relatively densely settled agricultural communities with domesticated plants and animals some 12,000 years ago. Smallpox and measles are among the very earliest of viruses that affected human beings. Influenza pandemics have been recorded as early as 1580 when Spanish colonial conquests began in South America decimating the indigenous peoples. The 1918–1919 influenza epidemic killed an estimated 50 million people world-wide and it was not until the 1930s that the science of virology was established with the invention of the electron microscope and immunology and vaccination developed. While there was some progress in recognizing viruses and growing them in culture in the early twentieth century it was not until the crystallization of the tobacco plant mosaic virus in 1935 that virology blossomed. Emerging viruses of the twentieth and twenty-first century have included zoonotic infections that jump from animals to other species such as SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome), that is a novel type of coronavirus.

In *The Pandemic Century; One Hundred Years of Panic, Hysteria and, Hubris* Mark Honigsbaum (2019: 11) argues that ‘far from banishing panic, better medical knowledge and surveillance of infectious diseases can also sow new fears, making people hyperaware of epidemic threats of which they had previously been ignorant’. He continues ‘the media play its part in these processes—after all, nothing sells like fear—but while 24/7 cable news channels and social media

help to fuel the panic, hysteria and stigma associated with infectious disease outbreaks, journalists and bloggers are, for the most part, merely messengers' (ibid). Honigsbaum (2019) argues it is mostly medical science and epidemiology that become 'the ultimate source of these irrational and often prejudicial judgements'.

The concept of 'viral media' dates from the first computer virus that dates back to 1986. When Robert T Morris released the 'Internet worm' in 1988 the word entered the language and the notion of 'computer virus' enter the public lexicon. 'While the worm did not contain any code to change data or otherwise corrupt the systems it invaded, its self-replication flooded many networks with an overload of traffic' (Chu et al., 2020). Viral media take their name from the fact that they are able to replicate themselves and convert themselves into copies based on how viruses propagate themselves and establish patterns of circulation within human populations. In this sense, it can easily become the self-replicating sentence including the expression of thought, information and data that circulate through social media, often in the form of memes as a form of informational viral patterns. Viral media also typically includes video that gets circulated many millions of times within a short period. All information that is easily shareable and websites that promote electronic sharing and exchange through decentralising platforms enable users to flick on or spread memes, leading to what many now see as an aspect of network culture and the cultural politics associated with it, which often means that content users become creators who can use or modify content. Network culture then is a recent reflection of the last few decades of internet use brought about by increasing interconnectivities on open platforms that increase the speed, velocity and scope of information, often also personalising messages and spreading hype, gossip and bullying comments that disrupt peer cultures.

Viral information and viral media have developed a special link between the way that information behaves in digital networks and the role that information plays as a messaging system in genomic biology. In social digital networks, viral media does not discriminate between information and knowledge: it can generate and circulate information irrespective of its truth value. It is an ideal medium for hype, exaggeration, falsehood, lies and gossip that are characteristic of the age of post-truth (Peters et al., 2018). Where knowledge on the standard account requires conditions of belief, truth and justification, information requires none of these conditions and misinformation and disinformation are fundamental categories of information. In the post-truth 'condition' there is a rift between evidence and truth. There are similarities between the propagation of fake news and social media 'echo chambers' and the evolution and transmission of infectious diseases. As Kucharski (2016) suggests 'disease strains can evolve and compete in a host population, much like rumours, and infections and opinions are both shaped by social contacts.' Today's news on Facebook outperforms real news and deliberately propagated false stories and conspiracies that plumb the social-psychopathic scepticism sows doubt of all institutions, especially government, sometimes causing great damage to the public realm (Peters, 2020a).

My take on viral modernity and a viral theory of post-truth grows out of a perspective developed from Wittgenstein and Foucault as antiphilosophers where both are seen as radical antifoundationalist thinkers who are suspicious of transcendental arguments and are involved in the attempt to overcome metaphysics, embracing genealogical history, contextualism, localism, and radical contingency while rejecting of the notion of truth as correspondence to reality (Peters, 2019a). After the linguistic turn, these antiphilosophers recognise that truthful propositions do not stand by themselves but are part of a system of beliefs (a 'theory') governed by underlying a grammar or set linguistic rules – a fundamental *semiotic* interpretation that focuses on coherence. My argument is that this is also an ecological approach with an emphasis on ecologies of truth that are dynamic and evolve.

Wittgenstein and Foucault are thinkers of different philosophical traditions who are different in many respects but both entertain and explore forms of antirepresentationalism and antiessentialism, and, in particular, the rejection the Cartesian basis of modern philosophy (Peters et al.,

2019). So truth cannot be regarded in terms of a single statement and its agreement with reality. The pre-philosophical notion as *Alethéia* is an ontological rather than epistemological notion, which is, 'truth' as a verb ('telling the truth'). Both Foucault and Wittgenstein embrace this emphasis on subjectivity and its relation to the Greek invocation 'Know thyself' and 'Care of the self' (Peters, 2019b). In addition, it could be argued both thinkers also develop a view of truth in relation to a network of beliefs that are consonant with the ecological, community and semiotic model of truth. This is one of the reasons I developed the concept of bioinformationalism (Peters, 2012) - the viral theory of post-truth, as Bateson (1972) puts it, 'is an ecology of weeds, and it is characteristic of the system that basic error propagates itself.'

The virologist perspective to bioinformational reality (Petar Jandrić)

In our recent article, we defined viral modernity as 'a concept that is based upon the nature of viruses, the ancient and critical role they play in evolution and culture, and the basic application to understanding the role of information and forms of bioinformation in the social world' (Peters et al., 2020). This concept, which 'draws a close association between viral biology on the one hand and information science on the other', is 'an illustration and prime example of [contemporary] bioinformationalism' (Peters et al., 2020). Every age has its own viral modernity. Following developments in information and communication technology, the Covid-19 pandemic is the first global exercise of bioinformationalist viral modernity where viral behavior of the biological novel coronavirus, 2019-nCoV is dialectically intertwined with non-biological viral information and viral media. The resulting combination is 'digital and analog; technological and non-technological; biological and informational' postdigital reality, in which the digital and non-digital interact in 'hard to define; messy; unpredictable' ways (Jandrić et al., 2018: 895).

Let us refine this theoretical conclusion using an example. Biological viruses, including but not limited to the novel coronavirus, 2019-nCoV, cannot make proteins and require a host cell to replicate. Information viruses work in the same way. When Rush Limbaugh, whom Trump recently awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, writes - 'The coronavirus is the common cold, folks (Limbaugh, 2020) - this is the birth of the information virus. Posted on Limbaugh's website, this information virus is harmless. Yet as soon as it reaches its host cells, readers, Limbaugh's information virus causes irresponsible behavior which causes the spread of the biological virus. Some of these host cells, or readers, will repost Limbaugh's information virus to other websites and social networks, thus causing its spread. In the language of virology, Rush Limbaugh (due to his digital audience reach) is a super-spreader of the information virus, and the spread of the information virus is dialectically intertwined with the spread of the biological virus.

While the information virus and the biological virus both contribute to the Covid-19 pandemic, our responses to their hosts are radically different. People who knowingly spread the biological virus are subject to harsh legal consequences, yet Rush Limbaugh's right to spread the information virus is protected by the free speech legislation. This opens up an interesting moral and practical question: what needs to be done with information viruses and their spreaders? Spreaders of biological viruses get a compulsory measure of physical quarantine - whether they like it or not, they need to remain isolated to protect others. What would an equivalent of a physical quarantine look like in the digital world? Should we temporarily suspend Rush Limbaugh's right to free speech? Should we allow him to speak freely, but restrict him from publishing his thoughts online? Our postdigital reality is a 'rupture and continuation' of pre-digital challenges (Jandrić et al., 2018: 895) - questions like this are both same and different as questions from previous viral modernities.

In earlier articles we elaborated upon the debate whether viruses should be understood as an inanimate matter or as a form of life (Jandrić, 2020; Peters, 2000). This debate extends to the

question whether viruses have their own will, or merely a natural tendency, to behave in certain ways. While this debate is largely unsettled, or more precisely ‘resolved’ with the Messianic conclusion that viruses reside in between the inanimate and animate world, in the following discussion I will anthropomorphise viral behaviour – not because I think that viruses really have a soul (in ancient Latin, word *anima* means soul or vital force), but because such anthropomorphism provides an easy (and common) way of explaining viral behaviour.

Biological viruses require a host organism for their reproduction. While they do cause some unpleasant consequences for their host organisms (fever, pneumonia, and other symptoms), biological viruses do not ‘want’ to kill the host organism because that would diminish their own chances for survival. Instead, biological viruses evolve towards various forms of more or less ‘peaceful’ existence with their hosts. The flu virus, for instance, has been with the humankind for many centuries now, and has evolved towards dangerous and unpleasant, yet manageable coexistence. As shown previously, information viruses follow the same principles. They need host computers and human consumers to reproduce, and they also cause various symptoms such as hardware malfunction and post-truth. Obviously, it is in best interest of informational viruses to keep the relationship with host computers and humans at a level of manageable coexistence – if all humans die, there will be no-one to share tweets and Facebook posts. In spite of similarities in their behavior, however, information viruses are fundamentally different than biological viruses, and it would be a stretch to expect information viruses to ‘recognize’ this interest.

Strategies against biological viruses include vaccines, antiviral drugs, quarantine, and so on. This list is by no means exhaustive, and merely serves to illustrate the point that every strategy against biological viruses has a roughly equivalent strategy against information viruses. Biological vaccines are roughly equivalent to informational firewalls, content filtering software, and so on; biological antiviral drugs are roughly equivalent to informational anti-virus programs; quarantine or restriction of movement of humans and goods is roughly equivalent to disconnecting a person or a computer from the Internet. These rough equivalences cannot be taken for granted, yet in the bioinformationalist dialectic between biological viruses and information viruses, they can serve as points of departure for development of a common anti-pandemic strategy.

Biological viruses and information viruses share many common characteristics including but not limited to similar mechanisms of reproduction and survival. Both types of viruses need human beings for their survival and evolve very quickly. Biological viruses and information viruses are fundamentally different yet dialectically interconnected, because survival and reproduction success of one is crucial for survival and reproduction success of the other. In our bioinformational society, therefore, symptoms caused by biological viruses such as Covid-19 cannot be thought of without symptoms caused by information viruses such as post-truth, and bioinformationalist anti-pandemic strategies should take a holistic approach against both biological and information viruses.

This virologist perspective offers a new lens for approaching our bioinformationalist reality, and this new lens opens up a myriad of new questions. What is the relationship between biology and information in our bioinformationalist reality? Which lessons from the world of biology can we take into the world of information, and vice versa? Answering these questions will require a lot of dedicated research. While it is impossible to predict what this research will bring about, I do believe that the virologist perspective may offer a lot of value in our postdigital, bioinformationalist reality.

The biopolitics of truth (Peter McLaren)

I would not wish to ascribe to malice what can be adequately explained by an unimpeachable narrow-mindedness but at this historical moment the attempt to disambiguate the meaning of truth has become increasingly more politicized in a disturbingly truncated fashion in this age of

toxicity, in this age of Trump. In the 1980s it was the post-truth proclamations of the postmodernists who held sway whereas today attempts to hijack the epistemological “relativism” arguments are increasingly undertaken by those who could be described as “alt-right adjacent” and they now dominate the paleoconservative mediascape in places beyond Fox News in growing social media platforms spawned from the fear-mongering swamplands of racism and white nationalism. Truth relativism (truth is relative to a particular frame of reference) and judgmental relativism (truth is relative to competing paradigms) are now being weaponized by the Trump administration (famously captured by Kellyanne Conway’s famous words, “alternative facts” and Trump’s use of the term “fake news” to discredit stories produced by journalists critical of the Trump administration).

Absent some ideal orator-citizen such as Cicero, critical educators can certainly counter the gas lighting philippics produced by Trumpland by engaging in a historical materialist rebuttal that enables us to utilize Hegel and Marx effectively in our attempt to engage the post-truth avatars at Fox News. We can, for instance, approach the notion of truth through the Marxist works of Paula Allman (1999, p. 236) who maintained that there are different levels of truth: meta-transhistorical truths, which appear to hold across the history of humanity but which must always be held to criticism; transhistorical truths, which are susceptible to future revision; truths that are specific to a particular social formation; and conjuncturally specific truths, which are transient but attain validity in the contextual specificity of the processes of which they are a part. Although adopting a negative dialectics to produce a critique of political economy and making it sound byte friendly is a challenge which I must defer to others.

While I agree that epistemological viewpoints about the world are both value-laden and theory-laden, unlike some postmodernists I don’t believe that we can alter the world simply by changing our beliefs about it. (We are, after all, *philosophers of praxis!*) And it would be a mistake to bleed epistemological objectivity into ontological objectivity and then claim that because there is no epistemologically objective or “God’s Eye” view of the world, there cannot exist an objective world ontologically. Just try walking through a wall or stopping traffic on a busy highway by exercising the power of your mind. Groups who occupy different geopolitical, ethnic, and socio-cultural contexts and who embrace radically different worldviews or cosmovisions, do not inhabit objectively different material worlds (at least so long as we agree that the same laws of physics hold true for all social universes—but of course the laws of physics are being rethought and the consequences for our understanding of consciousness could be dramatically revised in the process). Regardless of the “regime of truth” in which we find ourselves ensepulchured, we are forever obliged to distance from our “iron cage” (pace Weber) by always asking ourselves: By whose standard do we assess what is true and what isn’t? My answer is that no one individual or group can decide what is objectively valuable or meaningful for others. We therefore accept that no absolute, ahistorical criteria of truth and rationality exist. We can’t look blindly to some authoritative body who can pronounce definitively what is true and what is false. It has to be an ongoing global/communal conversation. It’s imperative that we constantly negotiate our position, even if we think it is universally true.

My interest lies in the self and social formation that I call the “revolutionary intellectual” whose essential gesture is to contribute to the formation of a counter-public sphere by making the case through a philosophy of praxis for a socialist alternative to capitalism. While subjects who inhabit the world differently cannot have access to the same or the full truth of human history, we do admit to the possibility of having access to partial truths. The world is, in fact, knowable, but our knowledge of the world will always be partial and relational. We are immersed in “fields of knowing”, and our engagement is historically situated. The situated nature of knowledge has led me to approach the question of truth in the context of understanding how knowledge is created, constituted and produced—in other words, in the context of how knowledge comes to be viewed as knowledge through the process of our self and social formation (what the Germans refer to as “*bildung*”). This presupposes the notion of education, that is, the idea

that a person can, in fact, be educated. This means recovering philosophy from its capture by anti-foundationalists, or to use another familiar term, from the postmodernists.

Philosophy has taken a beating over the decades from thinkers such as Wittgenstein, Nietzsche and Foucault. Foucault (1988) drew upon a Nietzschean genealogical method of the self that points to discursive transformation in terms of regimes of knowledge and the relation of the self to the question of truth – of telling the truth—and ‘the relation between ‘telling the truth’ and forms of reflexivity, in order to reveal the use and abuse of history (Peters, 2020c). And, as Peters notes, “[w]hile Foucault distinguished himself from Marx through a philosophy of the subjectivity trying to development a culture on the Left that was *not* Marxist, his work still bears traces of Marx and it is not silly to want to see overlapping connections.”

For Wittgenstein, truth can be found through an examination of everyday language games which make work and daily activities and social practices possible. In the *Will to Power*, Nietzsche writes that truth is a form of error which a type of living species requires in order to survive on an everyday basis. Nietzsche saw the world as a fable, Wittgenstein saw it as nonsense, as routine linguistic behavior, life-sustaining forms of life yet without ground or foundation. Wittgenstein challenges the Platonic distinction between knowledge and belief, rejecting Aristotle’s claim that science is knowledge through causes, arguing that humans claim to know what they already believe. In other words, belief precedes knowledge (Reitz, 2016). He maintained that learning is, in fact, based upon belief, and beliefs are, in fact, the artifact of indoctrination—they are the result of being familiar with the language games that comprise our forms of life, that which we know from our experience. Does this mean we throw out the idea of ontological necessity? Truth according to Wittgenstein is reduced to linguistic forms of life created through intersubjective human activity, randomly organized without any metaphysical basis. Here, description replaces explanation, and trust in our language games is taken as certainty or truth (Reitz, 2016). The meanings of words are quite plainly the way that we put them to use in our everyday social practices. If we follow Wittgenstein’s view that philosophy is a result of misunderstanding language, and that truth is really an artifact of assimilating the intersubjective teachings of our communities as we navigate our daily lives (Reitz, 2016), then we face some serious challenges today with the ascendancy of Trump. Unspooling Trump’s demagoguery can give us a clue of how educators, as public pedagogues, can begin to resist. Let’s take a look at Trump’s favorite linguistic maneuver. Pretend that your argument would be the superior one and would win out if only it were adjudicated fairly (perhaps by right-wing Supreme Court justices), that is, if only you weren’t being challenged or scolded by the media that are calling you racist, or sexist, and homophobic. Retreating into discursive tribalism and avoiding evidential claims of any kind appears to be Trump’s signature position. Here it is easy to recognize that criticizing the president of the United States is tantamount to being “an enemy of the people.” Do so at your own risk.

At the same time, it would be foolish to dismiss the importance of Wittgenstein or Foucault as simply enemies of truth since their radically different philosophies helped to initiate the social and cultural turn in philosophy based on an understanding of practice (Peters, 2020b). As Peters (2020b) points out with unwavering verve, Foucault’s hermeneutics of the self and the ancient practice of *parrhesia*, of speaking the truth, which was derived from Nietzsche’s Hellenistic and Roman Stoic philosophical *therapeia*, addresses the important concept of ‘care of the self’ as a critical philosophy traceable to Kant, a project which embraces a much wider view of subjectivity than Wittgenstein. Foucault and Wittgenstein, according to Peters (2020), “established antiphilosophy itself as a coherent counter-narrative or counter-tradition, a shadow boxer that seeks to achieve a form of positive nihilism that destroys the liberal Enlightenment tradition as a simple accumulation of inherited ‘truths’ that represent the major moves in the game of philosophy as such truth are asserted, argued for, opposed, accepted and fought for within the language of metaphysics to determine its legitimacy, its transcendence and its authority.” And Peters (2020c)

also reminds us that Wittgenstein's 'socialist' conception of a multiplicity of language-games "owes something to the social turn, social epistemology and, at one stage, to his fascination with Russia after the Communist Revolution when he thought at one stage he wanted to live in Moscow." Foucault's work also presents us with the concept of "historical ontology" (Hacking, 2002b) that can be distinguished from historical epistemology and historical meta-epistemology. Influenced by this contribution by Foucault, Hacking (2002b) introduces us to a conception of reason that is "neither subjective nor constructivist" but is linked to the idea of various "styles of reasoning" (see Peters, 2020b) related to "specific styles of demonstration such as experimental, axiomatic, and analogical-comparative techniques" (Peters, 2020b, pp. 164–65). Peters follows a similar trajectory in his concept of "ethico-poetic self-constitution" or put simply, "writing the self" (Peters, 2000). Charles Reitz (2016) and others critical theorists have called for the recovery of philosophy, largely through an engagement with the Frankfurt School, and in so doing Reitz singles out Marcuse's clarion call for more emphasis on the study of political linguistics, aesthetics, epistemology and the history of philosophy—in the context of deepening the critical praxis of our shared, practical, public life. This all makes sense. But while this will help us to directly challenge the logical positivists, we are sure to find the most stubborn and pugilistic resistance from the Trumpsters for whom entering the domain of logic is tantamount to giving sway to social justice warriors, such as proponents of climate science. Trumpsters find it easier to live inside the digital platforms with the flat earthers. Heaven forbid we make any concessions to climate science! But remaining solely in the realm of classical science, pulsating with the lifeblood of deductive reasoning, won't help us solve the problem of building a socialist alternative to capitalism. Adhering to abstract logic as the court of final appeal, alas, has its problems. According to Reitz, "truths of logic, untethered to any truths of physical fact, or social history, displace the real connections between language and the world" (2016, p.85). He goes on to say that "[N]othing is left but logic as a deductive system or necessary arrangement of parts once first principles have been arbitrarily determined" (2016, pp. 85-86). In other words, an argument can be made using deductive logic, or following an artificial logical, syntactical calculus, but that doesn't mean that the argument *is necessarily cogent or sound*. For that, you need a critical faculty. *That's where critical pedagogy comes in*. The question of what is true is not so much syntactical as it is pedagogical because education is about forming minds and for that you need premises that are warranted. And just look around and see the suffering of 99 percent of the world and it doesn't need rocket science to determine what first premises ought to be warranted. Here we are better off in the realm of liberation theology with its preferential option for the poor and suffering. That is, we are better off having an ethical imperative! Reitz feels that Dewey and Hegel would not require a course on formal logic because they believe knowledge isn't just an abstract calculus but a knowledge of some "dynamic reality" and that formal logic tends to "separate reason from its real social and cultural substrate and the conflicts that are seen as the very engines of the education of human reason" (2016, p. 88). Philosophy, then, following Hegel, must be *educated reason* and, following Dewey, must be thought of as coterminous with a general theory of education (Reitz, 2016). Certainly we need evidential statements, causal connections, value statements and deductive and inductive forms of inference but this entire process of discerning truth "needs to be a solution-oriented and knowledge-based process" and furthermore, it needs to emerge "from a thoughtful consideration of a specific content/problem area" (Reitz, 2013, p. 90). And this stipulates engaging in contemporary cultural and political conflicts. And that's our role as critical educators. We must consider carefully "the history of competing warrants for the evaluation of knowledge claims and political goals" (Reitz, 2016, p. 91) beyond mere pedestrian discernment. What are the historical warrants? What are the historical, international, and multicultural contexts that must be taken into account when examining the existing standards of criticism in the fields of ethics, epistemology and ontology? These are the questions that philosophers would do well to consider and educators would do well to put into practice as we engage in doing our part in

creating a counterpublic sphere in these perilous times. We are philosophers of praxis, after all, needing to know reality in order to change it. Neither deductivism nor postmodernism adequately explains the foundations of critique.

Conclusion (all authors)

This article consists of three radically different takes to a viral theory of post-truth. Michael Peters explores fundamental philosophical questions about our current postdigital reality and develops the concepts of bioinformationalism, viral information, viral media, and viral modernity. Michael points toward similarities in ways information behaves in digital networks and biological systems, and the rifts between evidence and truth, in our post-truth conditions.

Petar Jandrić compares behavior of biological viruses and information viruses and explores main similarities and differences between these types of viruses and between human responses to them. Petar points towards dialectical relationships between biological viruses and information viruses, and argues for holistic bioinformationalist anti-pandemic strategies. Our three different perspectives are indeed different in approach, focus, and conclusions. Yet it is at the intersection of these perspectives, that we seek a common viral theory of post-truth.

Using the lens of revolutionary critical pedagogy, Peter McLaren explores post-truth as a philosophical and political phenomenon which is closely linked to education. Peter seeks solution to the problem of post-truth in the formation of the 'revolutionary intellectual', who contributes to the formation of a counter-public sphere through a philosophy of praxis and seeks a socialist alternative to capitalism.

With the advent of computers, human society has entered a new phase of development characterized by radical interdependence between previously disconnected aspects of human reality. This postdigital reality is characterized by various 'leakages' between the inanimate and the animate, between the world of biology and the world of information, between the Global South and the Global North. To an extent, concepts such as bioinformationalism and viral modernity reveal conceptual connections and invite philosophical questions about relationships between life and information that have always been there. Yet these questions have also undergone significant transformations, and viral modernity of the Spanish flu is very different from the viral modernity of Covid-19. The virologist perspective to our bioinformationalist reality recognizes the dialectic between biological viruses and information viruses, or more generally between inanimate matter and life. This perspective may help us explore ways in which strategies against virus pandemics developed in the biological context, such as quarantine, can be applied to informational pandemics such as post-truth. Yet the virologist perspective to our bioinformationalist reality is also deeply political, and its development will depend on ways we educate ourselves and others for new reconfigurations aimed at (socialist) alternatives to capitalism. Our approaches to a viral theory of post-truth could not be further from each other; yet it is at their intersections, that we can point together towards importance of developing the virologist perspective to our bioinformationalist reality into the future.

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