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Donald Trump and Behavioral Economics

An Experimental Approach to Contemporary Politics



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Abstract

Confronted with the realization of the lacking nature of established thinking regarding the rise of so-called post-factual political phenomenon of contemporary politics, the thesis sets out to create new understandings of these phenomenon using an experimental space between Behavioral Economics and the philosophical thinking of Michel Foucault, Bruno Latour and Byung-Chul Han. The thesis aims to disrupt the established understanding of populism as a lack of facts, reason and rationality, and instead explore the logic of these movements using insights from Behavioral Economics. The experiment displays how a different understanding of the success of Donald Trump can be established using insights from Behavioral Economics and its reliance on a stringent stimuli-response logic.

The experiment serves as a foundation for a discussion of the suitability of the dichotomy between rationality and facts on one hand and emotions and seeming irrationality on the other, to describe the populist motions of our time. By considering how this dichotomy is no longer operatable, Trump's narrative of policy based on answers rather than questions, set the stage for a diagnosis of shift from politics to entertainment caused by a reliance in contemporary society on individualism and information. The outcome of the diagnosis is the reflection of Trump's reliance on narration and answers, rather than questions, displays the transformation from politics to entertainment, and serves as a possible explanation of why the western world currently has an entrepreneur and reality star as its leader

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1. Introduction

The majority main-stream media and political analysts spend most of the 2016 election campaign criticizing Donald Trump and his statements on various minority groups and solutions to grand political issues such as globalization, immigration and the economy. Few of them predicted him to have a real chance against Hillary Clinton or the Republican establishment. One of the root causes identified by critics of Trump have been a lack of rational and enlightened behavior amongst the electors, and Trump and his supporters' ability to produce so-called fake news, alternative facts and post-factualism.

The result of the election came as a surprise as most polling data and most experts predicted a Democratic win with a substantial margin. The models used to predict the outcome were outdated and they failed to see that Trump communicated in a way, not previously seen in American politics. Established media have struggled to explain why Trump won the elections and have so far, relied on a combination of so-called alternate-facts, post-truth and populism as the sources of Trump's success (Johnston, 2015; Shafer, 2015; The Economist, 2016; Sides, 2015; Ball, 2016; FiveThirtyEight, 2016).

In the following, I will consider different explanation as to why the communication of Trump has been so effective and delusive at the same time. To examine this, I will set up an experiment, using concepts, biases and heuristics from Behavioral Economics, to explain the effectiveness of Trump's presidential campaign. The experiment will include a palette of behavioral concepts which have been extensively explored in literature and will be used as a prism to evaluate the behavior of Donald Trump. A bias is indicated when people are supposed to behave in a certain way to maximize utility but instead do something different. It is a gap between our normative ideals and observable behaviour (Larrick, 2004, p. 316)

The experiment suggests that people rarely act based on facts and rationality, but rather on beliefs, emotions and so-called heuristic strategies and biases. Trump's way of communicating, his idiosyncratic style, can then be seen, not as a coincidence or acts of random blabber, but rather a well-crafted, well-executed strategy that enabled him to construct a much stronger narrative than competing candidates. Trump is connected to Behavioral Economics by his employment of the analytics company Cambridge Analytica, which specializes in using insights from Behavioral science and Big Data to target individuals with customized messages.

The objective of the experiment is to set a diagnosis for the political circumstances that transpired the victory of Donald Trump and challenge the boundaries for our understanding of his phenomenon as well as the boundaries of Behavioral Economics. It offers one explanation amongst many possible, and set out to see what an analysis of Donald Trump using Behavioral Economics could look like.

To lift the findings of the experiment, the philosophical works of Michel Foucault, Bruno Latour and Byung-Chul Han will be employed to challenge the existing dichotomy between factuality and irrationality and display a more nuanced understanding and discussion of a shift from politics to entertainment. The discussion will attempt a diagnosis or possible explanation of why the western world currently has an entrepreneur and a reality star as its leader.

2. Problem formulation

These preliminary considerations enabled me to ask the following research questions;

- i. Under what conditions can Behavioral Economics be used in an experimental space to generate new understandings of the phenomenon of Donald Trump?
- ii. How can philosophy be used to generate a diagnosis for questioning commonsensical dichotomy between truth and false in contemporary politics?

3. Structure of the Thesis

One difficulty faced by analyzing and discussing diverse and complicated topics of Donald Trump, Behavioral Economics and philosophy, is where to start. Each of the topics take part of a conceptual or ontological whole and are not easily singled out and put under the microscope. This leads to necessary compromises in the presentation of the theory, material and subsequent discussions. To accommodate this issue, a reading guide will be provided brief overview of results from each section and thus provide a preliminary understanding of what is about to partake and the findings of the Master Thesis.

3.1 Methodological Considerations

The methodological considerations will be analyzed, contemplated, discussed and compared. First the experiment using Behavioral Economics is set up and contextualized in the work of Michel Foucault. Then, an understanding of what qualifies the empirical and how it is to be selected, is established and evaluated against the considerations of Bruno Latour regarding the normative stance of the social sciences. The methodological stance of Behavioral Economics is then contextualized within the thinking of both Latour and Foucault.

3.2 Theory Section

This section selects and elaborates on the relevant theoretical work of Michel Foucault and Byung-Chul Han. Particularly on Michel Foucault's on power-truth relations, neoliberalism and genealogy, and Chul Han's work on the transition from Biopower to Psychopolitics. Next, the relevant theory from Behavioral Economics is laid out and exemplified, using observations on different cognitive and emotional biases and heuristics.

3.3 Analysis

The analysis consists of the experiment of how Donald Trump can be understood through the lens of Behavioral Economics. A number of statements, comments, Social Media messages, and relevant data will be contextualized within the field of Behavioral Economics. A special emphasis is put on Trump's use of language and his ability to create a certain narrative, relying on answers rather than questions. Finally, a connection is made between Trump's use of Behavioral Economics and his campaign's use of the services from the big data analysis firm, Cambridge Analytica.

3.4 Discussion

After the experiment, the consequences and implications will be discussed using the theoretical framework of Foucault, Latour and Byung-Chul Han. The normative stance of Behavioral Economics will be further scrutinized, and contextualized via the case of Cambridge Analytica. A diagnosis will

be made on the basis of Trump's understanding of narration and normativity and the implications of individualization discussed by Chul-Han. As part of the diagnosis, Trump's establishment of a narrative of answers to non-existing questions will be discussed using Chul Han's analysis of Plato's analogy of the cave, to highlight the effects of individualism on contemporary politics and commonsensical dichotomy between truth and false.

3.5 Conclusion

The important findings will be summarized. The experiment displayed how an alternate understanding of Trump's success can be established using Behavioral Economics and how it informed his campaign through the work of Cambridge Analytica. Chul Han's reflections on the effects of individualization and role of narration in Plato's cave, allowed for a diagnosis of Trump as the poet and entrepreneur, displaying the transformation from politics to entertainment.

4. Methodological Considerations

In the following, the philosophical foundation of the experiment will be discussed in detail and the potential pitfalls of such an analysis will be elaborated. The overall framework of the section is based on the methodology of Michel Foucault, his genealogy and inquiry into the workings on 'power' and 'truth', which also inspired Byung-Chul Han in his explorations of Psychopolitics. The section will consist of the following steps; First, to set up the experiment and contextualize it in the work of Foucault. Secondly, to discuss how the empirical is handled and how Donald Trump is viewed as a phenomenon instead of as an individual. This will include a set of criteria for how to deal with the empirical throughout the experiment. Thirdly, starting from the work of Bruno Latour, to discuss how Behavioral Economics are used and how a criterion of quality can be established. Finally, to consider how Behavioral Economics will be handled and discuss how the concepts from Behavioral Economics relate to the experiment both in terms of Donald Trump but equally under what presumptions Behavioral Economics can say something meaningful about the phenomenon and how Behavioral Economics itself can be understood in the prism of power/truth relations.

This will lead to Behavioral Economics being subjected to a Foucauldian critique. As such, this will draw on different works, lines of thought and metaphors of Foucault in order to express the methodological stand in this paper, as well as carve out the outline of Foucault's theorizing on games of truth and false and power relations. The role of philosophy in this context is to take over where Behavioral Economics falls short, of explaining the gaps of knowledge left out by economics and lift the level of abstraction of Behavioral Economics in order to achieve a new level of understanding.

4.1 Setting up the Experiment

The bedrock for the analysis is an experiment to see what Behavioral Economics could say about Donald Trump. In order to set up this experiment, Michel Foucault's work will be consulted and provide the initial framework and guidelines for what is essential in such an experiment. The experiment consists of an analysis of Donald Trump, through the lens of Behavioral Economics. It is not an attempt to vigorously replicate the work and method of Foucault nor to give a full explanation of the phenomenon using Behavioral Economics. Foucault's work rather serves as an inspiration and starting point for the initiation of the experiment and provide the parameters for how such an experiment could be conducted from a Behavioral Economics perspective, as in the case of his analysis of the Panopticon it is described as;

(...) the Panopticon was also a laboratory; it could be used as a machine to carry out experiments, to alter behaviour, to train or correct individuals. To experiment with medicines and monitor their effects. To try out different punishments on prisoners, according to their crimes and character, and to seek the most effective ones (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 205)

In effect the experiment is to use Behavioral Economics as a laboratory to carry out the experiment and try out a different approach to the phenomenon of Trump. Though often intentionally vague about his own epistemological foundation, the spirit in which Foucault questions established dogma is left untouched. The methodological starting point will be a walkthrough of his genealogical examinations and his reflections on the effects of neoliberalism. A parallel will be made between his analysis of the panopticon and the effects of Behavioral Economics on subjectivity.

In his 1978-79 lectures at Collège de France, Foucault describes how modern neoliberal governmentality is a form of indirect political governance of political subjects. In a neoliberal society, competition is of vital importance for understanding society, as a game between individuals, a game where the rules are constantly scrutinized and changed by the political sovereign or government with the purpose of maximizing the utility of its subjects (Foucault, 2009, p. 282). Foucault's quest is not to describe neoliberalism as a universal entity or whether it exists, instead it is to reformulate the question to how neoliberalism exists and under which conditions? It is a conditional exercise or thought experiment, contemplating the conditions of certain entities that are taken for granted in the study of history, sociology, etc. and Foucault's quest is to describe how these are not of any universal nature nor constants throughout time but equally subjected to changing circumstances and how it becomes an object in different times. Foucault does not attempt to retell history with great accuracy. His examination contains both an infringement of the perceived universal practices such as psychiatry, neoliberalism, government, punishment, sexuality, etc. and invocation of a set of conditions that need to be in place if either of these entities were to be of a universal nature.

Foucault's genealogical examinations is the study of how different practices have existed around these entities and is carried by the examination of their development over time, and challenges the commonsensical assumption that these social denominators are better today than ever before. To Foucault, history is a box full of good ideas that can challenge the way we think about society. In his analysis of the prison, Foucault contemplates that perhaps the prison system was more humane in the renaissance because of its obvious cruelty, whereas today it pretends to act in a humane way behind closed doors. The same with psychiatry, where the patient is separated from the rest of society rather than moving around freely and having a sort of protected status. In Foucault's view the mechanisms for normalizing the prisoner and the patient, triples down to all levels of society, and the infringe a certain logic or practice and leaves a certain exercise of power to some while influencing and restricting the behaviour of others (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 270).

His approach has an experimental nature in two ways. First in the sense that his analysis is set up to examine a question that is both hypothetical and a hypothesis. Secondly, in the analysis itself it reveals a great deal and adds to our understanding of its own object. In the case of neoliberalism, the boundaries for our understanding of both the analysis and the neoliberalism is moved by showing that neoliberalism is not a fixed entity but fought over realm of meaning and interpretation. Foucault's experiment consists in a conceptualization of the practice of governing, by analyzing its domain, its different objects, its overall rules, its global goal, all aimed to rationalize and optimize the mode of governing (Foucault, 2009, pp. 16-17). His method opposes traditional philosophical, sociological

and historical methods in the sense that instead of assuming universals such as the state, the individual, etc. he considers a historical reduction, instead of seeing how the history of the state, (neo)liberalism, madness, etc. can be established without the starting point of these universals. By assuming these universals do not exist, how can we then describe the different phenomena, events and practices that are attached to each of these universals.

It is the purpose of the modern neoliberal governmentality to constantly optimize the rules of the game, but not to plan or interfere with the game itself. The key turn in Foucault's analysis is his thesis of how the market develops from being the object of the governmentality, it becomes the principle for its limitation; "Laissez-faire is thus turned round, and the market is no longer a principle of government's self-limitation; it is a principle turned against it. It is a sort of permanent economic tribunal confronting government" (Foucault, 2004, p. 247). Previously, the object of governmentality and the means of the state was to define and maintain market and the Laissez-Faire, however in the realm of neoliberalism, the object and purpose is entirely different. The new object is the individual and the means is the logic of competition. Neoliberal governmentality is the strategic regulation of a certain kind of neoliberal individual and its subjectivity.

The aim of the experiment of Donald Trump is to take the same experimental approach as Foucault and ask, not how Behavioral Economics can or could say something meaningful about him but rather, under what conditions Behavioral Economics could say something meaningful about modern populism and the rise of Donald Trump. If Behavioral Economics is reduced and adapted in a way that it could say something meaningful about Trump, what would that be? And followingly, which implications and limitations do such an application of Behavioral Economics on a complex socio-political phenomenon like Trump have? Along the way, the various pitfalls and short comings of this approach will be discussed. The experiment is a much lighter version of Foucault's genealogical inquire and the aim is not at first to describe neither Trump nor Behavioral Economics as though they did not exist. Rather it is to use the shortcuts described by Behavioral Economics to offer a different explanation to a phenomenon and to break with its commonsensical understanding. Instead of looking at how Trump practices his own truth production, not an objective truth but with an influence in determining what the truth is and can do, the experiment does not follow vigorously in the footsteps of Foucault but looks at how the practice of truth surrounding Donald Trump has developed over time.

In order to conduct a full genealogical examination of either Behavioral Economics or Trump, one would have to look at how the practices of truth and power have developed over time in Behavioral Economics or the reign of Trump. In the latter case, the relevancy would be somewhat diminishing in looking at Trump before his move to the Oval office. As a business Mongol, his influence and ability to shape the reality of those around him would be rather limited. His past will be included as observations to the extent that it illuminates his present, for instance in his writings in *The Art of the Deal* and how his instinct for public manipulation is expressed in it. As will be discussed in the next section on criteria for the empirical, Behavioral Economics is interesting to the extent of what it can say about Trump, and as such, though interesting, the genealogical examination of Behavioral Economics falls outside the scope of the current analysis. It deviates from Foucault in the question of genealogy, and does not look at how Behavioral Economics has developed as a field and focuses to what extent Behavioral Economics can contribute to a meaningful analysis of Donald Trump.

What remains is in the experimental approach. It is used challenging the commonsensical understanding of what causes a given entity, and ask what conditions need be in place for Behavioral

Economics to say something meaningful about Donald Trump. Behavioral Economics becomes a tool for understanding and challenging a political/philosophical phenomenon, and allows thus Trump to become the object of Behavioral Economics. It allows the experiment to pose the question; if Behavioral Economics could say something about Trump, what would that be?

4.2 The Phenomenon of Donald Trump

In the following section, three criteria for the handling of the empirical will be laid out and discussed in relation to the overall goal of the experiment. These criteria are to ensure the relevance of the experiment in its empirical dimension and contain three overall considerations; representativeness, objectivity and relevance to the research question. Each of which are necessary to clarify the limits and scope of the experiment.

First, the observations should be fair and representative of Trump's general behavior in the sense that it will only be statements he has uttered and which can be traced back to him and which represent his general behavior and are not stand-alone cases. All of them have been uttered by Trump either directly in speeches and statements or indirectly on various Social Media, the alter of which he has used as an intricate part of his campaign and the role of which will be discussed later. This serves two purposes. Primarily, to maintain the phenomenological integrity, meaning that it cannot be verified or falsified whether he believes what he says to be true or not. From a scientific perspective, one cannot examine something that cannot be verified or falsified. Secondly, as part of the methodological considerations, which will be discussed later through the works of Michel Foucault, it makes little sense to point to these inconsistencies, which countless of commentators already have, since doing so have little or no effect. This last part is what is attempted illuminated with Behavioral Economics, namely, to paraphrase McLuhan, the message is the medium.

Secondly, the observations must be relevant to the experiment and to the theory employed. One implication of this has been the neglect of many interesting and thought-provoking statements, that could and should otherwise have been subjected to vigorous analysis. This is achieved by taking bits that have been discussed, brought up or otherwise been the subject of public debate, either from the mainstream TV outlets, the internet or printed media and to take from both outlets that have had a neutral, positive and critical attitude towards Trump although there have been an overweight of negative stories on his campaign (Patterson, 2016). To ensure integrity, most of the observations have been sustained by serval and contradicting media outlets. This step serves to ensure that the empirics included are equally as interesting and representative as possible, and thus live up to the Stenger-Despret principle for engaging social science, which will be discussed in the next section.

Third, the observations must point to an accessible and general behavior, i.e. traits that could have been used by anybody but specifically how Trump chooses to employ them. That means emphasis will not be put into his specific characteristics, for example his age, gender, skin-color etc. since these traits are not of a general nature and will not serve to illuminate the experiment. The behavior thus becomes simultaneously general and specific, conditions necessary for the application of Behavioral Economics. It ensures that the traits associated to Trump are of a nature which can be subjected to analysis of Behavioral Economics and not some inaccessible kernel. The purpose of this criteria is to ensure a meaningful transition from Donald Trump as an individual to a more phenomenological nature, necessary for the experiment to succeed. This step again reduces the relevancy of evaluating and judging Trump's policies as either good or bad but rather serves to lift the

object of analysis, i.e. the means that made it possible for him to act in this uniquely idiosyncratic way and subject this behavior to an experiment using Behavioral Economics

The conditions for the empirics in the experiment are to ensure the integrity of the experiment and maintain its relevance and in a beneficial way to limit the scope of the diagnosis it produces. It is to serve as a criterion of relevance and allows for the precise selection of some empirics over others. It serves to limit the scope of the phenomenon in this experiment to a self-contained entity that cannot be 'agreed' or 'disagreed' with, as these questions mark a more traditional political analysis, and subject it to an experimental space where the particular lens of Behavioral Economics can be employed upon it. It shifts the focus from further discussions, particularly regarding the human mind and the separation of mind and body, instead to only narrowly include the reflections that are relevant to the behavior of Donald Trump and which illuminate the experiment with Behavioral Economics. As such, there are plenty of statements and observations that only partially fulfill these listed criteria but in the interest of the current analysis have not been included.

A mosaic of statements, observations and small cases, following the criteria, has been assembled, which can purposefully be examined by Behavioral Economics. It sets the premise for an experimental space where philosophical and Behavioral Economics questions about Donald Trump can be asked and analyzed. The experiment is not an attempt at giving a complete picture and explanation of who Donald Trump is, and why he became successful in winning the campaign for Presidency of the United States. It is not an attempt to give a complete picture, but rather it serves to create an experimental space where certain philosophical and Behavioral Economics questions can be asked, explored and analyzed, and purposely explore new understandings of the conditions of contemporary politics.

4.3 Latour, Social Science and Behavioral Economics

If social science is to have a meaningful place in the (scientific) world, it must say something meaningful about the world, according to Bruno Latour. This consideration of Latour marks the pivotal point of the experiment.

In his discussion of the place and role of the social sciences, Bruno Latour uses the example of a *malettes à odeurs* (odour kits) in the perfume industry to exemplify his notion of learning to be affected. Latour elaborates how the odour kit is constructed in a way to distinct pure fragrances in such a way that one can go from the sharpest to the smallest contrasts. After weeks of testing a 'dumb nose' a trainee can be taught to distinguish more and more subtle changes in fragrance until it is no longer a 'dumb' instrument but instead *un nez* (a nose). The term nose is not a coincidence Latour notes, it is used in other contexts as well, as in the expression having a nose for... business/garden-ing/cooking. In the case of the *malettes à odeurs*, a new organ for the practice of smell has not been developed, this is an absurd gesture. We all have a nose and are able to experience the same sensory impressions as the now expert *nez*, however what the vigorous training has given is practice in how to be affected by the different nuances and a language for expressing them. In the same manner than the *malettes à odeurs* taught the trainee to be affected by different nuances in scent, Behavioral Economics enables a different view of human behavior.

The *malettes à odeurs* is set by an already expert or specialist in a systematic way with the purpose of moving the pupil from inattention to attention (Latour, 2004, p. 210). Behavioral Economics works as the *malettes à odeurs* in the way it has trained me to be affected by the special language of

Behavioral Economics or certain nuances of the specific phenomenon of Donald Trump. Instead of becoming a 'nose' as Latour suggests, the aim of the experiment is to articulate the layers of differences in the phenomenon of Donald Trump, that would otherwise go unnoticed without the insights from Behavioral Economics. The *raison d'être* of the analysis is the transfiguration of the specialist's *maquettes à odeurs*, or in other words, Behavioral Economics and the scholars who explore it, into the conceptual engine employed on a larger scale than was originally intended.

The wider philosophical justification for this step is also to be found with Latour. The Stenger-Despret Falsification Principle reinterprets what it means to be scientific in the social sciences, and Latour deliberates how social science needs to be interesting and risky and not dwell on tautological expressions or neglectable statements (Latour, 2004, p. 210). This scheme is described as "Instead of saying 'A is A', that is, repeat the same expression twice, an articulate scientific laboratory will say 'A is B, is C, is D', engaging what a thing is in the fate or destiny of many other things as well" (Latour, 2004, p. 210). As such, it is not an attempt at complete unambiguous answers, rather it is to display the very ambiguity in the forefront of what he considers good science all together.

Latour positions the Stenger-Despret Principle against the positivistic falsification principle of Karl Popper. Latour's claim is that in the world of articulation it is possible to recast a normative framework for the constructivist social sciences that are even stronger than the one of Popper. This new stance in epistemology, which poses the framework of the current analysis, is past that of the social constructivist and the traditional positivists. Objectivity is part of a reality that is constructed but can be momentarily understood by challenging and provoking established dogma (see (Haraway, 1991; Mol, 1994)). Knowledge is situated but can be understood and systematized however any such system will be constructed. That is not to say that knowledge does not exist, rather that it can be understood differently under changing circumstances.

The purpose of Behavioral Economics and any science for that matter should be to enable a new articulation of world. It is to bring the theory, science or field to the brink of understanding and explore the boundaries of what it can do. By giving people a language and training, by making them aware and giving them the tools to decipher the world in a new way. Or as put by Latour, the ability to articulate new experiences after training and practices "[T]hrough the materiality of the language tools, words finally carry worlds" (Latour, 2004, p. 210). As such, Behavioral Economics offers not 'alternative facts' but rather an alternative explanation using facts or behavioral observations, to the rise of Donald Trump in American politics. The experiment is an attempt to distort the now commonsensical explanations of lacking democracy, post-factualism and populism and show how a different starting point, a different *maquettes à odeurs* offers a different diagnosis of the phenomenon. The aim is to use well-documented biases to explain a political phenomenon, i.e. Donald Trump, but also to widen our understanding of the phenomenon. It is not enough simply to explain the phenomenon and put it to the context of Behavioral Economics. For the experiment to be successful, it must move the boundary of our understanding of both Donald Trump and Behavioral Economics.

4.4 The Case for Behavioral Economics

In his 2011 book, *Thinking – fast and slow*, Daniel Kahneman sets out to inform conversation by explaining and showing how systemic biases and heuristics effect human decision-making. Much in Kahneman's spirit, the role of Behavioral Economics here will be to inform on how systemic biases and heuristics can enlighten a phenomenon such as Donald Trump. This is done in two dimensions. The first is to explain and show how behavioral insights can aid to understand how Donald Trump was able to mobilize a more successful campaign, which ultimately led him to win the Presidency of the United States in the 2016 election. This dimension focuses on why Behavioral Economics works.

Secondly, behavioral insights are used more narrowly to 'explain' and show how Trump displays an understanding of these insights, whether intentionally or unintentionally. It is a reflection on how he uses the insights. Whether intentional or not, his 'methods' display in intricate understanding of the perceptions generated by Behavioral Economics. It will work as an engine for analyzing and understanding the phenomenon Donald Trump. The nature of Behavioral Economics does not as such allow a single bias or heuristic to offer a full explanation. The boundaries and considerations for such an analysis are set up in this section, partly as a philosophical reflection on the explanatory power of Behavioral Economics and secondly to outline the methodological outline and limitations for the analysis.

Though there are numerous described biases and heuristics, a pallet of these have been selected which together offer a coherent explanation of Donald Trump. Similar to the criteria of relevance in the empirical, only heuristics and biases relevant to illuminate Trump will be discussed. More biases and heuristics could have offered a more precise diagnosis, but in an attempt to follow Ockham's razor, the lowest possible amount than can offer as full a diagnosis as possible, has been selected. More biases could offer more precise but also more complicated diagnosis.

There is a series of limitations in the application of Behavioral Economics suggested in the experiment. To begin with, the methodological boundaries of the analysis must to be put forward. Normally examples and experiments in Behavioral Economics are carried out in much smaller scale and scope than what is proposed here. Intentionally, Behavioral Economics is put to the limit following the Stenger-Despret Principle, aimed at expanding the boundaries of the field. If interesting statements and bold hypothesis are necessities for good science, how does Behavioral Economics measures up to these criteria? For all intents and purposes, the same objective is set by Daniel Kahneman in *Thinking Fast and Slow*, however Behavioral Economics as a field can in certain instances fall short of the Stenger-Despret Principle. Similar to Daniel Kahneman's wish with Behavioral Economics, the purpose of the experiment is to create a nuanced and deepened understanding of certain phenomena by looking at systemic biases in human decision-making.

With the Stenger-Despret Principle in mind, Behavioral Economics offers a bold and risky explanation of Donald Trump. However, as a tool in this perspective, it is not a weakness that Behavioral Economics is normally intended on a smaller and different empirical field. Rather, following the Stenger-Despret Principle it is a necessity and in a broader context not controversial decision, considering the progressive use of Behavioral Economics to influence, understand and predict peoples' behavior (Hill+Knowlton Strategies, 2016; Cambridge Analytica, 2016; Confessore & Hakim, 2017).

The question of rationality can also be raised as a medium of critique. Strict economic rationality is understood as the solution to a given problem that can be drafted given that time and other resources

are abundant. It is based on the overarching understanding in classical economics of the complete rationality of all individuals to do what is best for themselves, utility maximizing rational agents. If we have all the time and brainpower to draft a solution to a problem that is the most rational. One stance is that we simply do not have a gap between what we do and what we ought to do. Some of the most avid believers in neo-classical economics even render that this gap does not exist, that there is perfect correlation between what we should do to maximize our utility and what we actually do, (Lar-rick 2004; Becker 1993). Foucault in his analysis of Neoliberalism deals with this question as;

“Rational conduct is any conduct which is sensitive to modifications in the variables of the environment and which responds to this in a non-random way, in a system-atic way, and economics can therefore be defined as the science of the systematic nature of responses to environmental variables.”

This describes the strict stimuli-response logic of Behavioral Economics and it is how strict economic rationality is adopted throughout the thesis. Thus, the aim of a Behavioral Economics analysis can be to see how,

“if you define the object of economic analysis as the set of systematic responses to the variables of the environment, then you can see the possibility of integrating within economics a set of techniques, those called behavioral techniques, which are currently in fashion in the United States. You find these methods in their purest, most rigorous, strictest or aberrant forms, as you wish, in Skinner, and precisely they do not consist in analysing the meaning of different kinds of conduct, but simply in seeing how, through mechanisms of reinforcement, a given play of stimuli entail responses whose systematic nature can be observed and on the basis of which other variables of behaviour can be introduced” (Foucault, 2004, p. 269).

Kahneman and Tversky’s view is that humans act under bounded rationality, that we have the potential capacity to make optimal rational decisions but circumstances prevent us from doing so. This is the study of the difference between “the systematic biases that separate the beliefs that people have and the choices they make from the optimal beliefs and choices assumed in rational-agent models” (Kahneman, 2003, p. 456). It is a very limited understanding of what rationality is and can Behavioral Economics, but for the sake of the experiment, further detail on this issue must be reserved for further research.

The important takeaway is that Behavioral Economics focus on a strict stimuli-effect logic that is indifferent to normative questions of morality, validity and truth-false relations. In other words, it does not matter if what Donald Trump says or does represents objective truth, it is the study of the effects his statements has on the voter, citizen or economic rational agent. As such, it can offer an entirely different approach to analyze and understand the phenomenon of Trump. To better understand the consequences of this behaviorist view, Behavioral Economics must be further examined in the light of the philosophical reflections of Foucault.

4.5 A Foucauldian reflection on Behavioral Economics

To Foucault, power is not the analysis of forms of domination or Power to influence the behaviour of others directly. It means “studying the techniques and procedures by which one sets about conducting the conduct of others” (Foucault, 1983, p. 4). This description gives a good indication of how Behavioral Economics can be understood and how it works. There are two major modes of operation in Behavioral Economics, one being the descriptive aspect and the break from the ontology of classical economic theory, and other being the much more intricate activity of trying to inform and influence human behaviour. It is as much an attempt to describe how we behave as a question of why we behave the way we do. Both his duality and the kind of understanding, which can be gained in Behavioral Economics can be understood via the works of Foucault and his three dimensions for analysing thought or what he calls ‘focal points of experience’, possible knowledge, normative frameworks of behaviour for individuals, and potential modes of existence (Foucault, 1984, p. 3).

In terms of possible knowledge, Behavioral Economics can be viewed in two perspectives; as an attempt to say something meaningful about the world as a social science, or as a conceptualization of human behaviour. The fundamental critique it raises is that certain phenomena cannot be explained with classical economic theory, like why most people display both risk seeking and risk averse behaviour depending on whether they are presented with a possible gain or a possible loss. It does not suggest a very provoking brake from classical economics, merely a change in perspective. As a theory, it does not move our understanding of human behaviour further than describing it, which is problematic according to Latour. His critique of the social sciences calls for more than just a lenient depiction of the world instead of a widening of our understanding of the world through new ontological perspectives. In order for the current analysis to take place, Behavioral Economics needs to operate in both perspectives of possible knowledge; as a science that, based on observations, can say something meaningful about the world but also in terms of the concepts deduced from these observations, which can work independently of the context of their origin. Latour discusses scientific authority as influencing human behaviour far more than any other obvious political situation would do (Latour, 2004, p. 222). Following this line of thought, any experimental set-up should allow for maximization of disputability.

The question is whether Behavioral Economics is able to distinguish between own possible knowledge and its normative frameworks, to use the language of Foucault. The problem is raised by Foucault in his analysis of the influence of power in the analogy of the Panopticon. Power, in this current perspective is best reflected in the self-subjection of individuals in the panopticon, as they behave in a certain way, not by the use of corporal force but, because of the panopticon, as a form of self-regulation (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 201). Foucault elaborates on the effects of the panopticon as follows,

“He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in Panopticism which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. By this very fact, the external Power may throw off its physical weight; it tends to the non-corporal; and, the more it approaches this limit, the more constant, profound and permanent are its effects: it is a perpetual victory that avoids any physical confrontation and which is always decided in advance.” (Foucault, 1977/1995, pp. 202-203)

This echoes both the way Behavioral Economics influences the individual or rather how Behavioral Economics sets out to describe behaviours as something that is not idealized by classical economics. Behavioral Economics does not reflect upon its own normative stance versus its scientific objectivity. It can to some extent be seen both as an attempt to correct behaviour in a normative way (Hill+Knowlton Strategies, 2016; Larrick, 2004) and as a way of describing and uncovering the reasons why people behave as they do (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011; Kahneman, 2011; Kahneman & Tversky, 1974). The implication being a duality as performing either as descriptive or normativity role, to use the terms of Foucault, but where Foucault has already reflected upon this duality, Behavioral Economics does a much poorer job at contemplating its own normative versus transformative stance, and leave it contingent to practice.

To round off the last notion of the focal point of experience, the *potential modes of existence*, biases and heuristics are not just observations of human behaviour, they are lenses that can say something meaningful about the world or in a narrower perspective, about Trump. Behavioral Economics positions itself as the study of certain aspects of human behaviour and the possible correction of these and as an academic discipline, it is as much a mode of life that can inform and enlighten the subject. The knowledge generated by this field could be used to question the commonsensical understandings of apolitical phenomenon such as Donald Trump, as it does not reflect the validity of his statements, but the effects they have.

5. Theory Section

5.1 On Truth and Power and Genealogy

By their very nature, Foucault's concepts of Truth and Power are closely linked. The following will present a series of examples of how Michel Foucault has dealt with truth and power, and offer some clarification as to how they will be put to work later in the analysis of Donald Trump.

Foucault himself refused to give a single definition, proposal or overarching theory to describe his examination of truth and power. Instead of reducing it to a philosophical essence that could be used to analyze any object in the world, Foucault remains much more elusive as he tries to analyze power in different forms. Power is the theory as well as the object of his analysis understood as certain rationalities that change tactics and form in a contingent process. Foucault does not use a single term or definition to describe his activities, so as to highlight what he is examining are not fixed entities but contested concepts. It is more a question of how different rationalities form and develop in a contingent way over time. It cannot be pinpointed, defined or founded and cannot be understood from within (look up source in History of Sexuality methods section). Power is not a state or a simple concept or notion but a system of relations which are coordinated and form a sort of web of mutual understanding. Power, in other words, produces or constitutes truth. The logic of games of truth and falsehood determines what is right (true) and what is wrong (false). In one interview, Foucault describes a 'game of truth', as a source of verification that produce a certain result.

"The word 'game' can lead you astray: when I say 'game,' I mean a set of rules by which truth is produced. It is not a game in the sense of an amusement; it is a set of procedures that lead to a certain result, which, on the basis of its principles and rules of procedures, may be considered valid or invalid, winning or losing. (...) in a given game of truth, it is always possible to modify this or that rule, and sometimes even the entire game of truth" (Foucault, 1983, p. 297).

This game of truth gives a good indication of what Foucault understands by the notion 'truth'. It is not a constant objective entity we know with absolute certainty; it is rather a game with ever-changing rules that do change often. The rules of the game are not concealed but somewhat clear and linked to relations of power, as Foucault examines in his inquiry into madness.

"I have been seen as saying that madness does not exist, whereas the problem is absolutely the converse: it was a question of knowing how madness, under the various definitions that have been given, was at a particular time integrated into an institutional field that constituted it as a mental illness occupying a specific place alongside other conceptions of illnesses" (Foucault 1997, 297).

The 'rules' in psychiatry are clear and there are very particular standards set for everyone who wishes to occupy themselves with psychiatry. However, the standards and rules are subject to change and are subjected to political scrutiny. Truth in this perspective will never be a constant objective entity but instead subject to change and influenced by power relations. Games of truth are closely linked with Foucault's connotation of power, but do not converge with it. In the case of madness, and as an extension psychiatry, Foucault postulates that it is not that these entities do not exist, rather that they, given a certain time and certain conditions exist and how they at different times take up a different form, in the sense of what constitutes a mental illness.

Foucault describes in his lectures at Collège de France from 1978 to 1979, how a modern Governmentality, a form of indirect political influence of economic subjects, is intrinsically linked with modern neoliberalism (Foucault, 2009). This governmentality is characterized by a particular way of governing or rather a particular way of managing its own expression, in a form of internal regulation, which is the political economy (Foucault, 2009, p. 29). Foucault describes competition being characterized by a market, and that competition is not naturally given but actively produced by the governmentality (Foucault, 2009, pp. 144-145). This competition is a game amongst individuals and it is possible for the governmentality to change the rules of the game, i.e. legislation, policy, etc. it cannot change the market's verdict of the current legislation, only set or change the rules by which the logic of competition is applied.

The market is best described as what Foucault elsewhere has termed a game of truth, or in the current case, a place where truth is produced. Truth in the case of the market is the price of goods against which all things in the market are evaluated. The process of political economy is constantly and relentlessly evaluating the act of government, but as Foucault notes; "Economics is a science lateral to the art of governing. One must govern with economics, one must govern alongside economists, one must govern- by listening to the economists, but economics must not be and there is no question that it can be the governmental rationality itself" (Foucault, 2004, p. 286). There is no doubt that the market or the economy can never take the place of government, simply because the activity of planning, native to all government is inherently impossible in the market. It is characterized by following an unpredictable path that no single actor can access but only participate in its constant creation.

Two areas of interest are particularly important for the evaluation of the experiment with Behavioral Economics. One is the market as a place of veridiction or as a game of truth, where the market is a tribunal constantly confronting the governing of the governmentality. Secondly, the principle of laterality, which will be put to further action both in the case of Behavioral Economics but also in the analysis of Donald Trump. It is the question of whether the economy can become the governmentality, but how do both Behavioral Economics and Trump stand up to these criteria.

Foucault does not refer to some sort of absolute truth or objectivity, neither does he completely dismiss the thought, knowledge or truth. His reflection is based on how truth is produced, given a certain historical and social context and how truth is the object of power. In this current context, it is important to note the close relationship Foucault ascribes truth and power to have. Power, in its most crude way, is not brute force of domination but to define the conditions of truth. This distinction is invaluable in understanding a phenomenon like Donald Trump and Behavioral Economics.

5.2 Byung Chul Han – From Biopower to Psychopolitics

The genealogical apparatus of Foucault will be elevated by the thinking of Byung-Chul Han in the discussion, specifically his reflection on today's biopolitical influence, what he calls Psychopolitics. It is a reflection on the consequences of neoliberalism that are far less visible and mutate to take in the forms of life that were previously considered outside the realm of it. Entities such as freedom, emotions, play and mass communication are mobilized to focus and intensify the optimization logic of neoliberalism. Chul Han builds on the Foucauldian notions of biopolitics Power and truth, but since Foucault did not experience the consequences of the collide between neoliberalism, mass information and the opportunities of modern day communication, he was not able to realize the scope of his analysis. Chul Han's critique is that due to his untimely death, Foucault never finished his work

and theory on biopolitics, as it is still a primarily disciplinary form. Had he been able to continue, Chul Han contemplates, he would have realized that it is not the biological body that is the ultimate object of neoliberal power, it is the psyche (Han, 2016, p. 48).

With this in mind, Chul Han sets out to question and problematize the concept of freedom, as it has mutated into a tool for neoliberal oppression, not analyzed by Foucault. It has itself become the oppression in a society that is the most efficient ever, yet obsessed by work. Chul Han deems that neoliberalism is very efficient and intelligent at exploiting freedom (Han, 2016, p. 23). Chul Han builds on Foucault's notion of Human Capital and finds the roots for the exploitation of freedom in the idea of the free market, and points to the misconception that it is not the individual that is free but the capital. Today, individuals must transform themselves into capital to achieve freedom, but the freedom that comes with it is only the realize their potential as capital, and not freedom to do whatever. The worker mutates to become the entrepreneur of his own human capital which consequentially leads to burn-outs, stress, mental disease and xenophobia. The physical body is no longer the productive force; thus, it is no longer the object of optimization, and no longer the object of biopolitical power. Instead, it is the mental process, the psyche that is to be optimized (Han, 2016, p. 48).

Chul Han discusses the consequences of the new digital panopticon, where the disciplinary has been substituted with the voluntary. On the internet, we are all part in building the new panoptic prison, completely transparent and subversive. We give our most personal information, not by force but of need. It is this complete efficiency that is the genius of the digital panopticon (Han, 2016, p. 31).

As a consequence of the subject as the ever-present entrepreneur, xenophobia raises in the face of problems and confrontations with individuals and cultures who do not fit in the timely, orderly, efficient neoliberal society. In the neoliberal society, when we fail, we are ashamed and can blame only ourselves or the others, but not question the foundation of society (Han, 2015, p. 27). The individual becomes disinterested in politics, as it has little to do with it and it becomes a consumer of politics rather than a participant. Science, politics and communication has become consumer products and lacking understanding of the parameters of science, transform our understanding of what is humanity and what it means to be human, to pure utility maximization in the neoliberal order. This logic has become the purpose of life, to maximize utility without regard for what else life could offer. Chul Han is conclusive is his diagnosis; transparency and information replaces Truth (Han, 2016, p. 68).

5.3 What is Behavioral Economics

Behavioral economics as a field has developed from traditional neoclassical economics and has challenged the traditional assumptions about human rationality. The main difference between the two fields is that where neoclassical economic theory is based on a normative model of how economic agents should behave, given absolute information and rationality, in other words, traditional neoclassical economic theory presents a prescriptive view of human behaviour. Behavioral economics, or behavioral psychology on the other hand presents a positive model of human behaviour. Rooted in psychology, it is in other words the study of how humans behave, rather than how they should (Deaves & Ackert, 2010, pp. 37 - 43). Their focus is on a primary level on a strict stimuli-response-logic, where little attention is paid to the ontological qualities of the initial stimuli.

The analysis conducted by modern behavioural economists relies on a stimuli-response-logic which is not new to economic theory. Behavioral Economics takes the assumptions of traditional economics and combined it with studies from positive psychology (Kahneman, 2011). Foucault shows how psychology can, and to some extent already have been incorporated into economic theory by Gary Becker, as Foucault notes; “simply in seeing how, through mechanisms of reinforcement, a given play of stimuli entail responses whose systematic nature can be observed and on the basis of which other variables of behaviour can be introduced. In fact, all these behavioural techniques show how psychology understood in these terms can enter the definition of economics given by Becker” (Foucault, 2004, p. 270).

The good behaviourist is thus firmly grounded in both economic theories, but where the classical economic analysis is firmly grounded in a premise of the individual as inherently rational and ought to behave in a certain predictable pattern, the behaviourist explores the connection between systematic nature and psychology. As such, Behavioral Economics does not depart from the subjectivity, outlined in classical economics, here defined by Becker, through the analysis made by Foucault;

Becker says: Basically, economic analysis can perfectly well find its points of anchorage and effectiveness if an individual's conduct answers to the single clause that the conduct in question reacts to reality in a nonrandom way. That is to say, any conduct which responds systematically to modifications in the variables of the environment, in other words,. Any conduct, as Becker says, which "accepts reality," must be susceptible to economic analysis. Homo Economicus is someone who accepts reality. Rational conduct is any conduct which is sensitive to modifications in the variables of the environment and which responds to this in a non-random way, in a systematic way, and economics can therefore be defined as the science of the systematic nature of responses to environmental variables (Foucault, 2004, p. 269”).

This is a colossal definition, not collectively endorsed by economists but it gives a sense of scale and scope of the potentials of economic analysis. Economics is the reduction of human behavior to numbers, statistics and evidences. The examinations conducted in Behavioral Economics is characterized by documentation not only human rationality but equally human irrationality. This positive, in the sense of observable and empirical, approach draw inspiration from psychology and other empirical social sciences, where meaningful results must be deduced from observations instead of induced from theory. The question now remains; if people are not rational in the traditional neoclassical sense, what are they then? The most prevalent answer comes from Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, with their Prospect Theory. Instead of assuming a strict economic rationality Kahneman and Tversky conclude that people weigh decisions and do not behave in the manner of strict economic agents. They describe it as follows;

“Prospect theory departs from the tradition that assumes the rationality of economic agents; it is proposed as a descriptive, not a normative, theory. The idealized assumption of rationality in economic theory is commonly justified on two grounds: the conviction that only rational behaviour can survive in a competitive environment, and the fear that any treatment that abandons rationality will be chaotic and intractable” (Kahneman & Tversky, 1992, p. 317).

The claim of Kahneman, Tversky and others within the field of behavioral economics is that observable human behavior rarely follows the strict line of complete rationality. When presented with a possible decision, i.e. a prospect, we seem to evaluate it differently and independently of other prospects.

Departing from the view of economics as a purely rational-normative undertaking, scholars within Behavioral Economics, particularly Kahneman and Tversky, represent a break with this traditional way of thinking about decision-making in at least three aspects. First, as mentioned that economic behaviour is a completely rational undertaking; secondly, that only completely rational behavior can survive in a competitive environment and thirdly; that a potential system for non-rational decision-making would be chaotic and not an object of science. There is no explanation in standard economic theory for people who buy lottery tickets and insurance, one is a risk seeking the other risk averse behavior but in fact, most of our behavior seem to fall outside the category of rationality and seems to be guided by something else. We tend to overestimate our own understanding of our circumstances, neglect statistics, think we are smarter than we actually are, assign emotional value to wrong decisions, and ignore facts, especially those that contradict our already established beliefs.

The traditional assumption is that presented with the right and complete information, people would choose what is best for them. It is however seemingly rare that we actually observably consider all the options and possible outcomes that are presented to us in any given set of circumstances. It has been documented that most people prefer Pepsi over Coke in blind tasting, but are much more likely to buy Coke (Frank, 2009). Even after being made aware that they preferred Pepsi in a blind taste, most people were still more satisfied with Coke. Observations like these seem to defy the rules of rationality and are not limited to Coke and Pepsi. In decisions, we seem to employ a number of heuristics to ease decision-making. A lot of choices are simply not that important to us. If in a restaurant you order a Coke and they only have Pepsi, you do not opt for no drink whatsoever. You just take the Pepsi. When was the last time anyone considered all the options of coffee in the supermarket, read all the descriptions and tried all of them? And would this be a suitable way to go about every single decision we make? Probably not. Much more likely, we use a series of heuristics to guide our decisions for us or instead our decision is based on our beliefs and values, such as buying organic or FairTrade. As such, beside from the observation of people's beverage biases, the most astounding accomplishment of the Coke/Pepsi conundrum was to convince people that there was any difference between the two drinks. Gigerenzer argues that the utilization of heuristic strategies can be advantageous, especially in situations where limited time and resources are available (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011). Often, we do not have time to calculate the correct course of action and therefore we must rely on simplified strategies in order to act in due time.

The problem presented in the third break in Behavioral Economics from traditional economic is whether the 'non-rational' behavior can be made an object of science at all. The object of science can be everything that is not completely random. All objects which can be systematic, that follow patterns and rules, and which logic can be explored is a potential object of scientific inquiry. Therefore, it cannot have the completely arbitrary, the meaningless, and the random as its object, until those are systematically put into order (Hylgaard, 2006, p. 11). Hylgaard describes how Sigmund Freud's theories of the effect of dreams, jokes, gaffes and confusion were not objects of science until Freud discovered them systematically and described their logic. Likewise, non-rational economic behavior can be made an object of science. It is in fact possible to map out an outline for human behavior, that is not based on strict economic rationality and yet remains orderly, though

much more complex and contingent than the traditional view. All this is part of a system of biases and heuristic strategies that aid, or perhaps even enable us to make decisions. Behavioral Economics is thus the systematic exploration of these biases and heuristics.

5.3.1 The Engine of Analysis – Biases and Heuristics

Kahneman and Tversky describe the utilization of heuristic strategies as follows, “[...] choice is a constructive and contingent process. When faced with a complex problem, people employ a variety of heuristic procedures in order to simplify the representation and the evaluation of prospects” (Kahneman 1992, 317). A heuristic strategy, or heuristic for short, can simplest be described as a rule of thumb. It is when we simplify a complex situation to make a decision, usually based on a rule or an emotion. Along the same lines, Gigerenzer describes a heuristic strategy as following; “A heuristic is a strategy that ignores part of the information, with the goal of making decisions more quickly, frugally, and/or accurately than more complex methods. (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011, p. 454). On a practical level, heuristic strategies employ effort reduction by examining few pieces of information, reducing the effort of retrieving information, simplifying information and weighting of it, integrating less information and examining fewer alternative explanations. One example from Gigerenzer is how birds and baseball players employ the same heuristic in catching preys and baseballs;

“Many animal species appear to rely on a single “clever” cue for locating food, nest sites, or mates. For instance, in order to pursue a prey or a mate, bats, birds, and fish do not compute trajectories in three-dimensional space, but simply maintain a constant optical angle between their target and themselves—a strategy called the gaze heuristic. In order to catch a fly ball, baseball outfielders and cricket players rely on the same kind of heuristics rather than trying to compute the ball’s trajectory” (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011, p. 463).

5.3.2 Evolutionary cause of heuristics

What is the cause of heuristic behaviours? Little is known about the cause although it is believed to be evolutionary. To most animals, the best behaviour is often redundant in survival situations. As noted by Charles Darwin, “It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change,” and as an extension, not necessarily the best strategy that wins the game. Often, the perfect solution is too resourceful to resonate before a much simpler solution has already resolved the problem. Predating civilization, our ancestors were faced with far more situations that required swiftness and speed than complete accuracy and rationality. If attacked by a wild animal, it is far more important to act quickly than to reflect on the very best response. Heuristic behavior or strategies are easily recollectable from the world of sports. A baseball player will often not have the insight in the physical laws that govern how the ball moves around the pit. However, he will be able to hit and catch the ball with considerable accuracy without an intricate knowledge of these laws and, as one might add, too many considerations will be hindering and time consuming.

There is evidence that heuristic strategies can outperform traditional utility theory in the short run when used appropriately. Gerd Gigerenzer and Wolfgang Gaissmaier describe in their Heuristic Decision Making what they call the Less-is-more effects. This is “when less information or computation leads to more accurate judgments than more information or computation” (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011, p. 453). This is often the case in what Gigerenzer characterizes as a large world positions, i.e. where “[...] some relevant information is unknown or must be estimated from samples, and the future

is uncertain, violating the conditions for rational decision theory” (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011, p. 453). To establish a baseline for estimating the usefulness of heuristic strategies, Gigerenzer uses the term ecological rationality to describe the study of environments that favours given strategies better than others (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011, p. 457).

5.4 Potential Biases and Heuristics

In order to transform into an object that can be analysed in Behavioural Economics, one must understand what Behavioral Economics is, what it can do and how it operates as science. The main objective of any analysis in Behavioral Economics is to see how behaviour can be influenced by various decimal inputs, the stimuli-response- logic. The ideal of such an experiment is to hold all other inputs stable and tweak one single input to determine the behavioral influence of that single input. This poses certain ontological challenges regarding the validity, scope and breath of the findings of the field, specifically the extent with which Behavioral Economics goes from the reliance of very specific and small-scale observations to generalization on human behaviour. The question becomes, to what extent can one of these often very controlled experiments say something meaningful about what it means to be a human. The preliminary critique is that, as with Latour’s malettes à odeurs, the purpose is not just to acquaint oneself with the scents of the sampling kit. It is to develop new ways of articulation.

The statements on general human behaviour rely on a broader assumption of the presence of a systemic ‘bias’ or ‘heuristic’, which is the gap between ideal perfect rational behaviour and observable behaviour. These biases and heuristics remain the contribution of Behavioral Economics to mainstream economics and provide a productive framework for explaining and analysing behaviour. The biases and heuristics underneath are amongst the necessary components for understanding Trump in the light of Behavioral Economics. They address different ways our sense of reality is distorted or can be manipulated but they do not provide the full picture. They have been chosen because they challenge the way we supposedly objectively perceive reality, and thus under the correct circumstances serve as powerful tools of manipulation.

In the following, several biases will be examined and put to work to assemble a malettes of Behavioral Economics which can offer one of many explanations for the phenomenon Donald Trump. They will serve to heighten the plausible articulation of certain aspects of the behaviour surrounding Trump, inspired by Latour. The experiment is as such not limited to only employing already explored biases and heuristics from Behavioral Economics, as the malettes à odeurs moves the trainee, not from inattention to attention, but from the inarticulate to learning to be affected, the active construction of new facts (Latour, 2004, p. 210). The experiment starts with the established logics and dogmas of Behavioral Economics and relies partly on already explored biases and heuristics but ultimately serves to move the boundaries of the theory and the object of analysis, that is, both Behavioral Economics and Donald Trump.

5.4.1 Recognition Heuristics and Availability Bias

“Recognition heuristic: If one of two alternatives is recognized and the other is not, then infer that the recognized alternative has the higher value with respect to the criterion (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011, p. 460).”

The recognition heuristic or bias is quite simple. When presented with two or more options, we tend to choose the one(s) familiar to us. We choose the tooth paste we have seen on a commercial, knowingly or unknowingly simply because it is familiar to us.

In the discussion of whether heuristics enable us to make choices rather than limiting our rational judgement, Gigerenzer and Gaissmaier contemplate that the so-called recognition heuristic can be used to predict elections (Gaissmaier & Marewski, 2011; Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011). A small random sample of the population was used, based on recognition of different political parties, to predict the outcome of four major German elections with better results than the standard statistical models. The mere recognition of a political party in the population turned out to be a good indicator of its success in the elections, especially with regard to smaller parties where polling data is often vague and ambiguous due to polling sizing. And as noted by Gigerenzer and Gaissmaier, “surprisingly, forecasts based on name recognition were as accurate as interviewing voters about their voting intentions. This holds particularly true when predicting the success of small parties, for which no polls are usually available because those polls would require huge samples. In contrast to surveys of voting intentions, recognition-based forecasts can be computed from small, ‘lousy’ samples (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011, p. 461).” The example displays two qualities. Firstly, that people react to what they know, i.e. the recognition bias, and secondly, that as a heuristic strategy it can have a better predictability than standardized models.

The standardized models are based on the otherwise reasonable assumptions that pollsters can make positive observations of the electorate and based on their answers and based on statistical analysis, come up with a fairly prediction of the outcome of an election. Considering the pre-election polls, few traditional pollsters were able to predict Trump's victory. For a further elaboration on why it has become more difficult to predict elections based on polling, despite more intricate and advanced data science methods see (Cassino, 2016). Cassino discusses the practical challenges that pollsters face when conducting surveys for elections. For a variety of reasons, certain groups are not heard or considered when it comes to polls and for various reasons, a lot of people are not providing the same answers to pollsters as they are actually voting. An important point in the discussion of the role of emotions in decision-making, as some people may know what they should reasonably vote, but decide not to do so when voting. As such, predicting the election result based on perceived popularity, as examined earlier, the objective of the survey remains the same but the questions given to the surveyed are completely different and when based on perceived popularity provides a way of debiasing the answer.

We assume that events which are easily called into mind are more likely to occur, an availability bias (Deaves & Ackert, 2010, p. 96). Two factors come into consideration of this topic, firstly the ease of association and secondly, the vividness of the exposure to the message. We react to scenarios which are easily called into mind, the more vivid the better. As a result, people often react positively on simplicity rather than complexity and we are willing to do a great deal to maintain our worldview, even when veraciously challenged. Therefore, many people are more afraid of flying than driving and biking, partially because they do not understand how the plane works, they do not react on the

actual probabilities and can much easier and more vividly call a plane crash into mind. This is enforced with a wish to understand what we do and to make what we do seem safe and sound, whatever the cost. That is why some people are afraid of sharks while there is very little chance of getting eaten by a shark, while it is much more likely that one will reduce one's life by not exercising enough, smoking, eating unhealthy, etc. (CPSC, 1995).

As biases to be explored politically, recognition heuristics and availability often depend on a somewhat brute force approach. We might tend to favor a certain political outcome simply because it is available to us. In a media context, it is very difficult to debias outlandish positions, and to maintain our attention media often rely on polarized positions. People tend to examine disconfirming evidence of our beliefs in a biased way (Lord, et al., 1979), and if continuously presented with two sides of an argument, many people will perceive the positions as being equal. Our minds favor simplicity and sheds troubling complexity, which can force us to make choices based on recognition and fear of the unknown, even when presented with the most obscure positions. People will react to repeated messages, because of recognition and, if dangerous and extreme enough, because of availability. When famous people say that vaccines cause autism or that global warming does not exist, repeatedly it will manifest in our mind and guide our decision-making process, especially when faced with overwhelming complexity.

5.4.2 Conjunction Fallacy, Representativeness and Anchoring

Another way of dealing with complexity is through what is called a Conjunction Fallacy. When confronted with a complex problem, most people tend to reduce the complexity by answering a much simpler question. In some instances, this can be a debiasing technique when a somewhat complex problem is decomposed into smaller, simpler problems and presents a much simpler cognitive exercise and work as a successful heuristic strategy (Larrick, 2004, p. 327). It can however result in a form of representative bias, where we integrate the likelihood of one event or outcome into another, which are somewhat unrelated or at least not completely dependent on one another.

Representativeness describes a misjudgement of how well the information visible is indicative of the possible outcomes of a situation and how individuals overestimate information ability to represent reality as such (Deaves & Ackert, 2010, p. 90). Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman defined representativeness as "the probability of an uncertain event, or a sample, by the degree to which it is: (i) similar in essential properties to its parent population; and (ii) reflects the salient features of the process by which it is generated" (Kahneman 1972, 431). In other words, we simply deem the likelihood of one event to be higher if combined or separated or vis versa.

To a considerable extent, this is one of the ways we cope with difficult and complex decisions on a day-to-day basis, however, in certain cases this might be a poor way of judgement and can work against us. In a political setting, this approach can be problematic. If our problem is for whom to vote, the ideal approach would be; what is the policy of the potential candidates and with whom do I mostly agree? Which can be a very complicated and complex question, hereafter the heuristic is; which of the potential candidates do I like the best/seem most sincere/is most authentic? Or instead of focusing on the vastly complex system of positions of all potential candidates, people will choose one question which is important to them and choose the candidate which best meet their expectations on that one issue. These much simpler questions can be answered by a heuristic response. Larrick (2004) describes it as;

(...) experimental decision-making tasks are either quite complex); or they are relatively simple, but require that a decision maker possesses both the right strategy (such as the conjunction rule) and the ability to recognize when to apply it. When decision makers lack the necessary cognitive capital, incentives may lead them to apply inferior strategies with more determination, producing a pattern I will call the “lost pilot” effect (“I don’t know where I’m going, but I’m making good time”). (Larrick, 2004, p. 321)

When confronted with two or more probabilities we deem the likelihood of all of them together higher than the individual probabilities. When confronted with several candidates for an election that are saying contradictory statements, we will use a simplistic strategy for choosing which one to vote for. We use an emotional heuristic and chose who we feel best about. This is also part of what is called Anchoring, which is the connection of meaningless information with decisions (Deaves & Ackert, 2010, p. 98). Our decisions are often influenced by seemingly meaningless information presented to us. Often, we tend to rely heavily on the first pieces of information presented to us, or what is first recollected (Kahneman & Tversky, 1974). Kahneman & Tversky conducted an experiment where two groups of students were tasked with multiplying the numbers 1 through 8 and 8 through 1, respectively in the timespan of 5 seconds. The media for the first group, which started with the lowest number was 512, whereas the median of the second was 2250. Although the correct answer is 40.320, the group with the highest number presented first, averaged almost four times higher than the one presented with lowest number first (Kahneman & Tversky, 1974, p. 1128). The Anchoring shows that getting into the minds of voters and consumers first is of vital importance if you are to succeed in business or politics. And as the next bias shows, once you make your way to the mind, it will go a long way to maintain a certain view.

5.4.3 Cognitive Dissonance

One prevalent bias is that we tend to assign immense value to information or views that are in line with what we already believe to be true. This makes it harder for us to change our opinions and once we are set in our mind it is much harder to change it. This phenomenon is described as cognitive dissonance, when we reject information which goes against our belief or seek information which we already consider to be true by picking and choosing information. As such, cognitive dissonance

“(...) creates a situation where people are motivated to reduce or avoid psychological inconsistencies, often in order to promote a positive self-image. In one experiment, voters in a Canadian election were surveyed either before or after leaving the ballot box. Respondents were more likely to believe that their candidate was the best choice and would be victorious if surveyed after voting rather than before. Apparently there was an unconscious coalescence of actions and views.” (Deaves & Ackert, 2010, p. 84)

Once we have made a decision, it is difficult for us to give it up and we will take pervasive action to maintain our world view. If we decide in the morning to go for a picnic and the weather forecast says that it is going to be clear weather with 80% certain, we tend to overvalue this (a case of representative bias and poor understanding of statistics) and consider it more than certain it will be picnic-weather. Even, if later in the day dark clouds fill the sky we will stick to our belief of clear weather almost until it starts to rain. In a study of cognitive dissonance, two groups, one in favour and one against capital punishment were presented with two studies of capital punishment, one seemingly in

favour and one seemingly against. Both groups found the studies that confirmed their belief to be much more convincing and led both groups to a firmer conviction rather than reconciliation as could be expected when presented with both sides of the argument (Lord, et al., 1979). The study also considered whether professional scientists were better at recognizing other arguments than regular people. Indeed, there was so substantiated evidence that scientists were better at recognizing their biases and often came with 'alternate interpretations' as to why the study that disproved their already established view was in some way flawed (Lord, et al., 1979, p. 2099). What is interesting is how both groups and both segments (laymen and scientists) saw the research as only confirming what they already believed instead of moving them close to each other, which could be expected when presented with both sides of an argument.

Lord et al. (1979) reflect on how the subjects of the experiment were unwilling to admit that they were wrong and alter their opinion once they had made a decision and would stretch quite far to fit information presented to them into their current convictions. In a broader context, this suggests that cognitive dissonance make us stick with our beliefs after their paradoxical nature should be obvious to us. Once we make a commitment to a decision we stick with it, even if that means negligent handling of information. As noted by Lord et al.

Rather, their sin lay in their readiness to use evidence already processed in a bi-ased manner to bolster the very theory or belief that initially "justified" the processing bias. In so doing, subjects exposed themselves to the familiar risk of making their hypotheses unfalsifiable—a serious risk in a domain where it is clear that at least one party in a dispute holds a false hypothesis—and allowing themselves to be encouraged by patterns of data that they ought to have found troubling. Through such processes laypeople and professional scientists alike find it all too easy to cling to impressions, beliefs, and theories that have ceased to be compatible with the latest and best evidence available. (Lord, et al., 1979, p. 2107)

In a political setting, it is vital which decision or position that finds its way to our subconscious first. If we reach a conclusion on a subject we will pursue that in order to maintain our world view. If we first start to believe in 'fake media' or alternative facts, all attempts to counter this belief by established media, experts and contesting politicians will only serve to firm our conviction. As a result, if a lot of people feel negative about the state of their country, candidates who confirm their belief will resonate much stronger than those who do not. In a sense, if a demagogu candidate like Donald Trump can tap into peoples' already established beliefs and further convince people that there is a fundamental flaw in the political system, cognitive dissonance becomes a powerful political tool.

In a sense, cognitive dissonance is an expression of how we want to be right even when it should be evident that we are not. It represents an emotional response where it is easier for us to maintain our belief than admit to others and ourselves that we are wrong. Cognitive dissonance expresses what some have argued is the emotional foundation of decision-making. In the next section, the possible role of emotions will be elaborated.

5.4.4 Emotion

The role of emotions in decision-making has been widely explored in behavioral literature (Damásio, 1994; Deaves & Ackert, 2010; Elster, 1998; Elster, 1994). The idea that people act on emotion instead of reason is not new but have met some resistance as it challenges decision-making theory and economic orthodoxy (Elster, 1998). However, there is substantial evidence that the human mind

is not free to reason, so to speak. Especially regarding making decisions, humans seem to depend heavily on emotions. In the following section, the role of emotions in decision-making will be elaborated from two positions, namely Jon Elster and António Damásio, and their implications for the experiment will be outdrawn. Elster will be used to draw a framework for defining what qualifies as an emotion, and Damásio will be used to describe the implications of emotions.

In neoclassical economic theory, little or no interest is paid to the role of emotions, and for good reason. For better or worse, neo-classical economics is based on the firm assumption that markets consist of rational agents that act to maximize their utility based on full information. In other word, emotions do not fit in the equation, then there is nothing left for emotions to explain. However, very little evidence supports this to be true about human decision-making. As a theoretical experiment, perfect rationality can easily be assumed but is very rarely observable outside these experiments. Emotions are used in two ways to explain this gap between what can be rationally expected by people and what they do.

Elster (Elster, 1998; Elster, 1994) is one of the most notable scholars in mapping emotions in decision-making is. He argues that there is notable evidence to suggest that emotions have a large part in the way humans make decisions and provides a framework for defining emotions. Elster points to the lack of emotions as an explanation of mainstream economic problems, often exemplified as a lack of apparent rational behavior. Elster describes different emotions and what characterizes an emotion. He uses six features to define an emotion; cognitive antecedents, intentional objects, physiological arousal, physiological expressions, valence, and action tendencies (Elster, 1998, p. 49). Together or separate these features encapsulate an emotion. These are not logical necessities, present in all emotions, but in various quantities inducible in most emotions in some quantity. The qualities of emotions have been noted by Aristotle and are still central to the debate (Elster, 1998, p. 49). With this 'definition', Elster goes on to line up the widely-recognized forms of emotions as follows: "Among the states that unambiguously qualify as emotions we may first list various social emotions: anger, hatred, guilt, shame, pride, pridefulness, admiration, and liking. There are various counterfactual emotions generated by thoughts about what might have happened but didn't: regret, rejoicing, disappointment, elation. Third, there are emotions generated by the thought of what may happen: fear and hope. Fourth, there are emotions generated by good or bad things that have happened: joy and grief. Fifth, there are emotions triggered by the thought of the possessions of others: envy, malice, indignation, and jealousy. Finally, there are cases that do not fall neatly into any special category, such as contempt, disgust, and romantic love or "limerence" (Elster, 1998, pp. 47-48).

Antonio Damasio equally considers emotions to be essential for understanding how humans make decisions. As his example, he uses the case of Phineas Gage, a 25-year-old construction foreman, who accidentally shot a metal rod through his jaw and forehead. Miraculously, he survived but suffered from severe changes in behavior. Fully able to perform all the activities he could before, he seems to have lost his concern for the future (Deaves & Ackert, 2010, p. 129; Damásio, 1994, pp. 3-20). Damasio uses Gage and other similar examples to conclude a strong connection between planning, rational decision-making and emotions. The amygdala, widely believed to be the part that controls emotions, is the oldest part of the brain which we share with most other mammals. The frontal lobe, which guides our sense of logic, language and reasoning, is the youngest part and it is much larger compared to all other animals. Damasio points to Gage and other similar cases as examples of how the logical and emotional parts of the brain need to work together to make decisions (Deaves & Ackert, 2010, pp. 128-130). It is often seen that patients with damage to the frontal lobe

and especially the connection between the amygdala and the frontal lobe, are often perfectly able to reason and have little to no effect on their cognitive abilities. However, the patients examined by Damasio had become unable to make decisions and plan for the future. Emotions, as noted by Elster, are an evolutionary contraption that “enhance our capacity to make good decisions, not by guiding us to the best possible decision, but by ensuring that we make some decision in situations where procrastination is likely to be disastrous” and followingly, “a rational person would know that under certain conditions it is better to follow a simple mechanical decision rule than to use more elaborate procedures with higher opportunity cost (Elster, 1998, p. 60). Elster does not think that emotions ‘fill the gap’ left by rationality, rather does emotions create the gap and then fill in themselves.:

It is somewhat misleading, therefore, to assert that emotions are a "supplemental" principle that "fills the gap" between reflex-like behavior and fully rational action. (...) If we do not and cannot respond to emergencies by following a mechanical decision rule, it may be because our cognitive faculties are temporarily clouded by the emotional arousal caused by the emergency. The emotion serves as a functional equivalent for the rational faculties it suspends, by inducing the very behavior that is rationally required and that reason, if left undisturbed, could have come up with by itself. The emotions do solve problems but problems that are to some extent of their own making. The capacity for the emotions to supplement and enhance rationality would not exist if they did not also undermine it. (Elster, 1998, p. 60)

Damasio concludes, based on his research with brain damaged patients that emotions are closer to the center of decision-making than rationality, while acknowledging that both have advantages that can best be utilized in combination with one another. Damasio describes how one of his patients spent tediously large amounts of time with certain tasks and that "the particular task . . . was actually being carried out too well, and at the expense of the overall purpose." (Damasio, 1994, p. 37) With another patient Damasio tells two odd conflicting stories. On one day, his lack of "gut reactions" was highly advantageous when driving on an icy road, where most people tend to hit the brakes when they skid rather than gently pulling away from the tailspin. On the next day, he reports

discussing with the same patient when his next visit to the laboratory should take place. I suggested two alternative dates, both in the coming month and just a few days apart from each other. The patient pulled out his appointment book and began consulting the calendar. . . For the better part of a half-hour, the patient enumerated reasons for and against each of the two dates: previous engagements, proximity to other engagements, possible meteorological conditions, virtually anything that one could reasonably think about concerning a simple date. Just as calmly as he had driven over the ice, and recounted that episode, he was now walking us through a tiresome cost-benefit analysis, an endless outlining and fruitless comparison of options and possible consequences. [We] finally did tell him, quietly, that he should come on the second of the alternative dates. His response was equally calm and prompt. He simply said: "That's fine." (Damasio, 1994, pp. 193-194; Elster, 1998, p. 61)

As such, what characterizes as emotions have an observable influence of how we make decisions and perhaps to a greater extent influence and provide an explanation for what we do and why we do it. Following both the lines of both Damasio and Elster, emotions, regardless of their effect on human judgement have a strong influence on how we make decisions and on what we base those decisions. On a motivational level, emotions are a much stronger engine for mobilizing response than rationality. As a motivational tool, emotions have long been considered far superior to any form of reason. Simon Sinek, a famous motivational speaker, describes how great leaders motivate by communicating not to people's reason but to their emotions and beliefs (Sinek, 2009). Sinek argues that the most successful people and organizations communicate to people's belief. Likewise, few modern motivational books and literature spend their precious pages arguing how to lead and persuade people using statistics, reason and rationality. Emotion trumps reason every time. If something does not feel right it takes an enormous amount of convincing to change someone's mind.

Emotional response provides an explanation of why we buy everything from certain toasters to why we buy Coca Cola over Pepsi, or prefer Mac over Windows. As Sinek says, "people don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it" (Sinek, 2009). If an organization, company or person can install certain emotional triggers in people's minds, it can work as a powerful tool for persuasion and an equally powerful tool for management. One aspect of the study of emotions in Behavioral Economics is their Anchoring in fear (Elster, 1998, pp. 50-51). With regard to decision-making, fear has been a recurrent explanation for emotional response (Deaves & Ackert, 2010, pp. 122-123). The fight or flight reflex enable us to cut through an otherwise complicated cost-benefit analysis in the face of danger and act regardless of lacking rational completion. As described by Elster, "Emotions enable social species to coordinate their behaviour, to respond to emergencies, to priorities goals, to prepare for appropriate actions, and to make progress" (Elster, 1998, p. 60). In a modern context where humans are not often faced with immediate and present danger, the remnants of fear still guide decision-making but in a much more settle way. As was described on availability biases, we react to scenarios that are familiar and easily get called to mind, and this is especially true if the situation is one of danger or triggered by fear.

Mobilizing people on a basis of emotions, especially fear will always trump rational completion. As such, fear can be a powerful tool for influencing behavior and even stronger a political tool. As a consultant of Trump noted, "Fear-based appeals hit people on a primitive level. When people are under stress, the hind brain takes over (...) Fear of Mexicans, fear of the Chinese, fear of African Americans—Donald Trump has very deliberately stoked it and inflamed it and made it a centerpiece of his campaign" (Ball, 2016).

6. The Experiment with Donald Trump and Behavioral Economics

You have to understand, Donald creates his own reality. Whatever Donald says at the moment is, to Donald, the truth. And he believes his own stuff. And this is partly Carson's¹ problem. You know, there's no objective reality out there. You know, Carson doesn't seem to understand it took an enormous army of multiple countries to defeat the Nazis. He thinks a group a persecuted people with, you know, small weapons are going to stop the Nazis. But this is very typical of Donald, and his views are highly flexible depending on what he sees as his momentary negotiating advantage. - David Cay Johnston (Johnston, 2015)

One cannot help but notice that Trump speaks differently from other candidates. His particular style has been mocked by his opponents for its obvious lack of palpably content, generous handling of facts and lack of cohesion. Behavioral Economics offer an explanation why this special approach of his is so effective. The recognition heuristic provides an explanation of Trump's success. If something is familiar to us, we are more likely to respond positively to it, and by constantly being in the media via simple and often provoking language, the heuristic can be seen as a bias that Trump has utilized.

After decades in both business and entertainment, his idiosyncratic way of communicating has been practiced and rehearsed to perfection. What was seen in the US Presidential campaign was an excellent communicator who showed an intricate understanding of his audience and what affects them. Trump used language to achieve political goals in a way not seen in contemporary politics before. He divides, provokes, and challenges established political entities like few have done before him.

Various elements of his idiosyncratic style will be laid out to form a set of observations that can be analyzed with concepts from Behavioral Economics. The observations will revolve around his idiosyncratic style, how he engages with his audience, how he uses words to his advantage like few other politicians today. How he communicates to provoke, not to reach common understanding and how the premise of the discussion is not to seek common understanding but specifically to divide his audiences. Followingly, how he uses a deliberate fragmentation of facts and partial truth to create his own political reality.

In order to conduct the experiment with Trump and Behavioral Economics, it is necessary to elaborate the way Behavioral Economics handle the various attributes that are part of the examination. As mentioned earlier, Behavioral Economics operate with a very strict stimuli-response logic, where certain stimuli can be said to have, or not to have, a particular influence or stimuli on the behaviour of the test subjects. The primary attribute of a certain observation is its effect on behaviour and not its metaphysical presence or ontological qualities. For instance, with a feature such as 'authentic' that can be attributed to Donald Trump, its primary quality is how it effects behaviour and not some deep understanding of the real kernel of what 'authenticity' is or can be. It does not matter how a concept of authenticity can be philosophically defined or how it relates to other concepts but how it effects behaviour. This has implications to how lies and un-truths are perceived in public debate. In

¹ Ben Carson, Secretary for Housing and Urban Development under the Trump Administration

the following, several examples will be given to show how Trump can be understood through the lens of Behavioral Economics, and how these insights also seem to inform of his behaviour.

6.1 How Trump Talks

“(…) Post-truth politics is more than just an invention of whingeing elites who have been outflanked. The term picks out the heart of what is new: that truth is not falsified, or contested, but of secondary importance. Once, the purpose of political lying was to create a false view of the world. The lies of men like Mr. Trump do not work like that. They are not intended to convince the elites, whom their target voters neither trust nor like, but to reinforce prejudices. Feelings, not facts, are what matter in this sort of campaigning” (The Economist, 2016)

An excellent example of how Donald Trump crafts a message is examined by video essayist Evan Puschak (Puschak, 2015). In an interview with Jimmy Kimmel, as a response to his own suggestion to ban Muslims from entering the US, Trump is asked if he finds it unconstitutional to discriminate based on their religion. His answer is astounding and a testimony to how skilled Trump is at manipulating language;

“But, Jimmy, the problem – I mean, look, I’m for it. But look, we have people coming into our country that are looking to do tremendous harm. You look at the two – Look at Paris. Look at what happened in Paris. I mean, these people, they did not come from Sweden, okay? Look at what happened in Paris. Look at what happened last week in California, with, you know, 14 people dead. Other people going to die, they’re so badly injured. We have a real problem. There is a tremendous hatred out there. And what I wanna do is find out what it – you know, you can’t solve a problem until you find out what’s the root cause. And I wanna find out, what is the problem, what’s going on. And, it’s temporary. I’ve had so many people call me and say thank you. Now, if you remember, when I did that a week ago it was like bedlam. All of a sudden – and you watch last night, and you see people talking. They said, “Well, Trump has a point. We have to get down to the problem.” The people that are friends of mine called say, “Donald, you have done us a tremendous service.” Because we do have a problem. And we have to find out what is the [gets cut off].” (Jimmy Kimmel Live, 2015)

This is a typical example of the way Donald Trump talks. The first quality to note is that he does not really answer the question asked, and secondly, that his language is very simple, both grammatically and conceptually. Out of the 220 words in the passage, 172 of them only have one syllable, 39 have two syllables, and only four words have three syllables (three of which are “tremendous”) and only two words have four syllables, “California” and “temporary”, the latter he does not even pronounce properly. He emphasizes the end of each sentence and constructs his sentences in a way so the important word is in the end, like; problem, harm, point, root cause, etc. Mostly using single syllable words, they follow a certain rhythm and ends the sentence with one of these buzzwords. In the paragraph, he manages to say ‘problem’ six times. He says ‘I’ five times and refers to himself twice. He draws on Anchoring to connect otherwise non-connected issues and problems with him as the unescapable solution.

This is observable in much of his communication, even its most simple form. He frequents short sentences with important word in the back (Swaim, 2015). This is rare because traditionally, politicians are aware that their language will be scrutinized by journalists, Trump is not worried about that. This makes Donald Trump sound simple and entirely different from other politicians. One estimate is that his speak is on a fourth-grade level, based on his sentence structure and the length of the words he uses (Viser, 2015). Whether this is intentional or not, it is very effective. Simplicity in spoken language can be linked with higher polling numbers as a more simplistic language tends to poll higher than a more complex language, further emphasizing the strategy behind this observation.

In a comparison of most frequented words between Trump and Jeb Bush, Bush's most frequented words were; The state strategy government should create president American in growth of ISIS and forces. Trumps most frequented word were; I they you Trump very great he China said me money going and Mexico (Liberman, 2015)². Besides the much shorter average of the words Trump uses, they are also less passive and reflective of than Bush's. The words Jeb Bush uses are very much what one would expect a politician to say. Trump's language is entirely different. He talks about himself, much more than any of his competitors. It is indisputably about him and his perception of the world around him. As Puschak (2015) also notes, it almost feels as if Trump is talking to himself. Thus, it becomes a lot easier to understand how Trump sees the world which again gives him a sense of authenticity, as if there is a direct connection between what he thinks and what he says.

In both the case of the question from Jimmy Kimmel and the comparison with Jeb Bush, Trump draws on the recognition bias. By repeating the same words, over and over again, and by utilizing his idiosyncratic language, Trump is effectively marketing himself like any other product we are sub-consciously nudged into buying. Personality has always played a role in politics, however the defining characteristic of a good politician should be the content of their policy and not only their personal likeability. Their language play a crucial part in how we perceive them. As one political commentator noted:

"[...] politicians are frequently too careful with their language, and this conscientiousness can begin to sound like deceit or cowardice. When they rely too heavily on abstractions, when they avoid concrete nouns, when all their statements seem always hedged by qualifying phrases, they sound like politicians, in the worst sense of the word. To my ear, anyway, Hillary Clinton sounds this way almost all the time. Whether used well or poorly, however, the language of a typical modern politician has a distinctive sound to it. It sounds complex and careful -- sometimes sophisticated, sometimes emotive, sometimes artificial or over-scripted, but always circumspect and inevitably disingenuous." (Swaim, 2015)

Trump is a master at manipulating language and shows an avid understanding of how it influences the human mind. Few will be able to accurately recollect the words of any politician, but it is the feeling they leave us with, that is important. Trump displays an intricate understanding of this and to an almost extreme extend talks in imagery. Instead of weighing his words carefully and considerately, he sounds fragmented, simple and emotional. He leaves people with a sense of fear and even

² Based on word counts from each candidate's announcement speech, debate remarks, and several press conferences or interviews (two for Trump, three for Bush). A total of 14,746 words for Trump and 14,429 words for Bush where the basis (Liberman, 2015).

if what he says is somewhat incomprehensible, anybody can still understand the emotional message he is conveying. By placing words like ‘problem’ in the end of the sentence makes a very simple conceptual structure where each sentence only conveys a single, simple concept. Word that have a negative tone like problem, harm, and die/injure, dominate his message. Although many of the sentences are incomprehensible, there is no doubt of what he means. Most of them have a very negative tone and the meaning is perfectly vivid to anyone who hears him speak, as noted by one commentator his reality “(...) is dark, divisive and pessimistic, and it tends to position him and his supporters as heroic victims of injustice” (Sherer, 2017). Our brains react on this emotional simplistic stimulus, the narrative that Trump depicts and not the obvious lack of rational coherence.

Trump does not seem to choose his emotional messages at random. A survey from Chapman university found that 41% of Americans were either Afraid or Very Afraid of terrorist attacks (Chapman University, 2016).

Tabel 1 America's Top Fears 2016 (Chapman University, 2016)

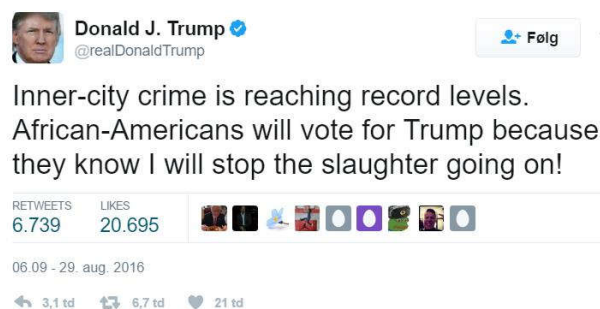
| | Fear | Fear Domain | % Afraid or Very Afraid |
|----|--|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Corrupt government officials | Government | 60.6 |
| 2 | Terrorist Attack | Manmade Disasters | 41 |
| 3 | Not having enough money for the future | Economic | 39.9 |
| 4 | Terrorism | Crime | 38.5 |
| 5 | Government restrictions on firearms and ammunition | Government | 38.5 |
| 6 | People I love dying | Illness and Death | 38.1 |
| 7 | Economic/financial collapse | Economic | 37.5 |
| 8 | Identity theft | Crime | 37.1 |
| 9 | People I love becoming seriously ill | Illness and Death | 35.9 |
| 10 | The Affordable Health Care Act/Obamacare | Government | 35.5 |

Statistically, it is very unlikely for any person to be killed by terrorism. However, we are hotwired to react to these stimuli like fear and anxiety. And fear can work as a catalyst for conservative behavior. In a broader socio-political context, several studies suggest that political views can to some extent be assigned to different ways of coping with fear (Laber-Warren, 2012). Researchers found that conservatism to some extent is guided by fear and conservatives are more “anxious than liberals, which may be why they typically desire stability, structure and clear answers even to complicated questions” (ibid.). In the wake of 9/11, researchers found that people from across the political spectra became more conservative. In other words, there is a possible link between the state of fear and the motivated reasoning associated with political decision-making and which is not neurologically linked to reasoning but to emotions (Westen, et al., 2006). Fear as a mobilizational emotion is not linked to rational responses but to emotions and thus susceptible to reasoning or exposure to facts. This dynamic has been explored by Trump, as he has built a strong sense of fear amongst the electorate.

6.2 Lenient Facts and Overconfidence

Trump's lenient and paradoxical relationship with facts was described in Time Magazine as; "despite the luxury and ease of his own life, he seems genuine in his belief that the system is rigged and that life is a zero-sum game: no one wins without some else losing. Reality, for the reality-show mogul, is something to be invented episode by episode" (Sherer, 2017). This has especially manifested itself in his presence on Social Media, which played an intricate part of Donald Trump's campaign. As a deliberate and stated strategy on Social Media, Trump has displayed a particular kind authenticity, build on imaginative and outrageous statements.

It has long been documented that people who evaluate negatively are perceived as more intelligent (Amabile, 1981). People with concerns of their own intellectual capabilities tend to evaluate negative criticism as more intelligent, although the study found no evidence to suggest that negative evaluation could be used as a self-presentational tactic. But as the Amabile (1981) notes, "(...) it can be said that intellectually insecure individuals can be successful in their attempt to gain observers' esteem by negative criticism. The observers, unaware of the evaluators' bias, may assimilate those evaluators to a common prototype of the intelligent but unsparing critic." (Amabile, 1981, p. 153). This suggests that intellectually insecure individuals can and will be viewed as more intelligent if they bluster negative criticism, which is similar to what Donald Trump has done through his campaign. As mentioned previously, many of his messages, and especially those that are not about his policies, carry an ambiguous yet negative message. Often he talks of 'problems' and invent statistics that do not exist to make a point or an argument. In one case, he tweeted about crime in inner-city areas;



However, there is little to no evidence that crime is statistically on the rise. In fact, crime in cities with a population over 250.000 people has been steadily declining since the mid-1990s (Politifact.com, 2016). The point is not just that Trump is making up 'facts' in order to promote a certain political end. As such, it is easy to fact-check the tweet as mere false or ungrounded. What is important is that Trump displays an advanced understanding of what is important to people and what they respond to, which is not facts and truth, but rather in this particular case, negativity. He presents an alternate reality in which he is the hero that will save the day, and all his opponents are part of the establishment which are the cause of all that is wrong with America today. His alternative reality is "(...) is dark, divisive and pessimistic, and it tends to position him and his supporters as heroic victims of injustice" (Sherer, 2017). But not different from how many people experience their own situation as according to the survey from Chapman (Chapman University, 2016).

Trump understands that by constantly provoking and stating the outrageous and invoking fear, he engages the media and the public. It is impossible for a journalist not to react to such a statement and yet again, Trump proves his understanding of the old phrase; there is no such thing as bad

publicity. As noted by Obama's former White House spokesperson;" There is one page in the Trump White House crisis-management playbook, and that is simply to tweet or say something outrageous to distract from a scandal." (Sherer, 2017)

From Behavioral Economics point of view, there is certainly evidence to support the strategy. As has been discussed earlier, recognition heuristics make us choose the options familiar to us. This is even the case after we are made aware of our choice being false and us being otherwise overconfident. In a study of overconfidence, behavioral researchers found that highly confident individuals attain a higher social status from being overconfident, and are not penalized on their social status even when the overconfidence is revealed to others (Kennedy, et al., 2013). This lack of lack of punishment due to overconfidence can also be linked to the bias of Cognitive dissonance. When confronted with inconsistencies in our belief, we are willing to alter reality as presented to us, in order to fit it into our already established beliefs.

As a result, it has proved difficult to establish a vehicle for critique and to conform the behavior of Trump. The inconsistencies and lack of factual basis in his statements only seem to strengthen his support and resolve rather than work against him. Roger Stone, a former Advisor to Trump, explains the decisive feat in his idiosyncratic style; "For Trump's allies, this is a measure of strategic brilliance, not defective character. He understands how to make something an issue and elevate it in the discussion by saying things that are contrary, perhaps even unproved. He has the ability to change the subject to what he wants to talk about" (Sherer, 2017). The lack of punishment from overconfidence is visible in the transition Trump being President-elect to after his inauguration.

Truth in its most objective form is of secondary importance at best, and an emotional response like a feeling of negativity is much stronger than any righteousness or truth. What is more is that Trump understands that truth as a subjective experience exists in the moment, in the narrative, and not in the perpetual struggle to find ever stronger facts. What may seem like outburst of delusion under the lens of rational fact-finders, becomes an emotional reality of those who read the tweet and experience fear triggering an emotional response.

6.3 How Trump uses Twitter

"The final key to the way I promote is bravado. I play to people's fantasies. People may not always think big themselves, but they can still get very excited by those who do. That's why a little hyperbole never hurts. People want to believe something is the biggest and the greatest and the most spectacular" (Trump, 1987).

Since 2011, Trump's Social Media presence has been in the hands of his New Media Director Justin McConney who explained that "the two most important things for a celebrity on social media are to be authentic and to give your fans what they want" (Edelsburg, 2015). From the onslaught, his presence on Social Media has been to act as "his own little news network" (ibid). This started long before his campaign for President and helped build a base and presence that was unmatched by any other candidate. This has been a gateway for Trump to get his statements from thought to being picked up by the big media outlets and has been part of his tendency to hijack the debate by making outrageous statements.

All the major candidates used Social Media but none of them had the same success in engaging their followers like Trump. In a comparison between Trump and Clinton from August 2015 to July

2016, Trump's posts on Facebook attracted an average of 72,058 likes. By comparison Hillary Clinton's Facebook post 'only' had 14,691 likes, or five times less than Trump (Matei.org, 2016). Later, the online presence of Trump vs. Clinton will be further elaborated but for now it is sufficient to say that Trump completely outperformed Clinton on Social Media, especially on Twitter (Matei.org, 2016). Likewise, Time Magazine reviewed his 298 tweets from when he was elected President to March 21 and found that the average retweet of his tweets was 23.945 while those that included a clear falsehood, like the accusation of wiretapping of Trump Tower by the Obama Administration, were retweeted in average 28.550 times (Sherer, 2017). In traditional media, factuality and thoughtfulness were the virtues, amongst journalists and politicians alike but "the virtual world far prefers the outrageous, the new, the controversial to the normal routine of reason and verification" (Sherer, 2017). Normally, politicians are careful at what they say because it is important, and they will be put to answer if they say something controversial or wrong. That does not seem to be the case with Trump. Here it is not a question of what he says that is important, it is how he says it. His most (in)famous proposal has been to build a wall along the US southern border towards Mexico, supposedly to prevent illegal immigrants from entering the country.



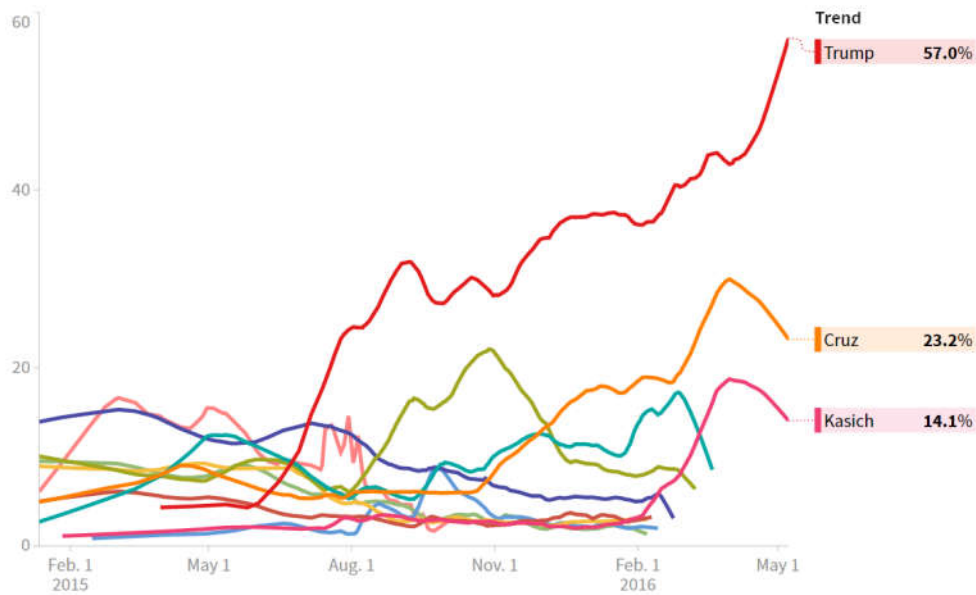


One most admire Trump's ability to control the debate and communicate in the simplest of ways to capture his audience and the electorate's attention. He constantly shows that he is willing to go beyond what the other candidates are willing to do and his presence on Social Media also allow him to react constantly to political movements. When someone criticized him or his proposed policy, he did not have to wait for journalists or hold a press conference to respond or get out a message, instead he could instantly comment on Social Media. As noted in Time Magazine; "In the radical democracy of Social Media, even the retweets of outraged truth squatters have the effect of rebroadcasting false messages. Controversy elevates message. And it keeps the President [Trump] on offence" (Sherer, 2017). The Wall presents both a metaphor and an indication of his ability to construct a narrative revolving around answers, though often unclear what the initial question was.

He never sounds rehearsed, a stable the most avid consumers of political content have been accustomed to for a while. Another interesting feature of his tweets is that he often talks about himself in the third person, almost as if it was from a traditional news outlet. This feature is particularly prevalent when dealing with 'facts' or most specifically when he challenges established factual positions. In some way, he becomes his own news outlet as noted by Edelsburg (Edelsburg, 2015). This desire for control of the story is astounding and when confronted with counterarguments he tends to simply come up with more outlandish claims.

This success on social media was part due to immense and long-term preparation of his profile and base-supporters, both in the 'real world' but equally on Social Media. His persona has been of wide interest to the public, especially since he accused Barack Obama of forging his birth certificate. Such statements, entertaining combined with his somewhat humorous nature kickstarted his trajectory as a media darling when he launched his campaign and gave him a much larger share of media coverage (Sides, 2015). In the National Republican Primaries, Trump continuously got more coverage than the other candidates. In a measurement made by the Washington Post, Trump is constantly ahead of his competitor, from when he announced his candidacy in February 2015 to his nomination as the candidate for the Presidency from the Republican Party (Sides, 2015);

Figure 1 Trump's share of media mentions, retrieved from Google Trends



Trump's messages have resonated with a somewhat marginalized group, especially in the right wing of the Republican party, as noted by Sides (2015); "Trump has tapped — whether intentionally or by accident — into a deep and powerful distrust and dislike (bordering on hate) that the Republican base feels toward politicians including (and maybe especially) those within their own party" (Sides, 2015). This combined with his often-outrageous comments and statements, made a cocktail that most media could not ignore. Trump himself described his success on Twitter in a comment brought by the Washington Times;

I know a lot about Twitter and Facebook, (...) Somebody said I'm the Ernest Hemingway of 140 characters. Can you believe it? (...) I've got almost 5 million people and [will] soon have way over 5 million people because we picked up, I think last week, over 100,000 people in a short period of time, and we're picking up a lot and it's fun, (...) And you know, it's like owning the New York Times without the losses — it's tremendous, (...) It gives you a lot of power. (...) If somebody says something badly about you, in the old days ... I'd go 'I'm gonna get that guy, but now I just say, oh, said something bad — bing bing bing — I say [he's] [sic] really bad about that. ... It's amazing. (Washington Times, 2015)

Statements such as these provide a valuable insight into the almost naïve and direct approach Trump has to Social Media. There does not seem to be much of a filter between his immediate thought on an issue and his statements on Social Media or elsewhere. For Trump, it seemed important always to have a stronger say, on all issues ranging from immigration to crime over to military interventions and presences in other countries to abortion and women's rights. Combined with his simplistic way of communicating, one easily get the feeling that he would take his policy further, that whatever the question, he has a simple answer to it, even if going further would borderline obscurity. In terms of policy, or a lack thereof, it makes only limited sense to define policies in relation to other candidates but from a Behavioral Economics or even a traditional economic perspective it seems quite sensible.

If policy is measured not by its reason and sanity but as a zero-sum game of voters, which seems to be the case in the mind of Trump, it makes sense avoid thorough policy discussions or to propose the most extreme policies. An explanation for the success of that strategy can be found in the availability heuristic, i.e. we tend to assign a great value to something that is familiar and easily revocable to us (Deaves & Ackert, 2010, p. 86). By describing the same 'problem' and its solution and using vivid imagery, Trump creates an availability heuristic for us, that he is the solution to a variety problems and looming catastrophes. A kind of better-safe-than-sorry and winner-takes-all mentality applies and get rewarded.

The availability heuristic or bias has been generated by Trump's continuous overrepresentation in the media, which was dominated by "extremely light on policy" and "overwhelmingly in tone", yet Trump was often favored compared with his competing candidates, both in Primaries and against Hillary Clinton (Patterson, 2016). He is good at understanding how certain voters feel about an issue and conveying that emotion. Instead of talking like politicians usually do, he addresses our emotional subconscious in a way that does not feel staged or manipulated. It gives his followers a feel of authenticity, like there is not another person behind his actions, both in terms of advisors in communication but equally in personality, like the Trump you see is the one you get. This particular style of his has been commented by socio-linguist Jennifer Sclafani;

"When Mr. Trump gives a speech, viewers notice his distinctive idiolectal use of discourse markers, which also give the impression that he is having an intimate conversation with individual voters rather than giving a prepared speech to a mass audience. This off-the-cuff, unrehearsed style also gives the impression that Trump is speaking for himself and not from a speechwriter's script (a point he explicitly makes), which contributes to what his supporters describe as his "authentic," "trustworthy," and "relatable" character—all important qualities to cultivate in a presidential self. On the other hand, when others hear this same idiolect, they connect these conversational devices with social meanings like "casual," "unreflective," "unprepared," and even "reckless"—certainly not qualities of an ideal presidential self" (Sclafani, 2016).

Though not a behaviorist approach, it captures many of the essential traits of Donald Trump's successful behavioral tools, while adding the observations that are difficult to measure yet easily visible and explorable. He had an unprecedented success in turning the above-mentioned characteristics into traits that distinguished him from his competitors.

What Sclafani perhaps missed is that the objective of the Trump campaign was not to make Trump look 'presidential', or statesmanlike. If the competition was about who would be most suitable for office based on experience, policy and composure, Trump would not have been the obvious winner. Instead, the Trump campaign tapped into the resentment and made the dividing issue exactly the mistrust for establishment and traditional politicians, as noted earlier by Sides (2015); "Trump has tapped — whether intentionally or by accident — into a deep and powerful distrust and dislike (bordering on hate) that the Republican base feels toward politicians including (and maybe especially) those within their own party" (Sides, 2015). This transformation of what the election was about, the criteria for the candidates, combined with his idiosyncratic style make him seem authentic and different from the other candidates (Kruse, 2017). Trump as an idiosyncratic/authentic leader, making decisions in the moment was part of what ultimately won him the presidency. It did not matter whether

he seemed presidential or not, as that was not what the election was about. It was about this mistrust and resentment which Trump mobilized, against the established politicians. Donald Trump almost never sound rehearsed.

From the beginning, there has been a clear correlation between how Donald Trump performed in the polls and his media coverage (Sides, 2015). His strategy has been obvious; to draw attention to himself by constantly stating infuriating entertaining things, whenever the focus shifted away from him. By constantly being on the news and visible, he could manifest himself in people's minds as a more and more serious contestant. He turned it from a competition of content, which would display his limited experience in politics/policy, and into a sheer competition of outrageousness. Rather than who do you agree with, he used a brute force method to get into people's heads, and to be recognized by the public. His personality and access to media played a crucial role and allowed him screen time.

The mass media bestow prestige and enhance the authority of individuals and groups by legitimizing their status. Recognition by the press or radio or magazines or newsreels testifies that one has arrived, that one is important enough to have been singled out from the large anonymous masses, that one's behavior and opinions are significant enough to require public notice. The operation of this status-conferral function may be witnessed most vividly in the advertising pattern of testimonials to a product by "prominent people." Within wide circles of the population (though not within certain selected social strata), such testimonials not only enhance the prestige of the product but also reflect prestige on the person who provides the testimonials. They give public notice that the large and powerful world of commerce regards him as possessing sufficiently high status for his opinion to count with many people. In a word, his testimonial is a testimonial to his own status (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 2007).

His position as a potential candidate naturally came with the media coverage as he got to define what should be discussed and set the agenda by uttering more and more lavish statements every time the spotlight went away from him. This served two purposes. First, to trigger a recognition heuristic in people and secondly to validate him as a candidate. The attention he gains from the media coverage he gains from the onslaught slowly validates his candidacy, without most established sources realizing it. Trump is aware of this tendency as he noted in his book *The Art of the Deal*,

"One thing I've learned about the press is that they're always hungry for a good story, and the more sensational the better. It's in the nature of the job, and I understand that. The point is that if you are a little different, or a little outrageous, or if you do things that are bold or controversial, the press is going to write about you. I've always done things a little differently, I don't mind controversy, and my deals tend to be somewhat ambitious" (Trump, 1987).

Enchanted by prestige, controversy and drama, constant media presence built his recognition which in turn allowed him more and more air time. Whether due to increased competition or the effects of Social Media, established media has followed trends and strive to publish shareable content, able to 'go viral' (Berger & Milkman, 2013). Emotions are vital and anger particularly has a strong effect on a story's likelihood of being shared on Social Media. This draws traditional media to compete on publishing emotional content, that trigger responses and has the ability to 'go viral'. Shareability is a

completely new phenomenon, which many established sources still do not know how to compete with, thus relying heavily on increasingly emotional content.

Trump was able to leverage this trend and constantly define the topics for debate, by invoking controversy, drama, anger and negativity. The election became about two kinds of controversy. Clinton's and the elitist, 'crookedness' and lack of understanding of ordinary people and Trump's authentic, entertaining and outrageous, saying-it-as-it-is. As McConney described in his strategy for Trump's Social Media presence, while seeming authentic, it is equally important to give people what they wanted. In this setting, facts and concrete policies have taken a secondary stand to his outrageous statements and behavior. It makes false statements resonate and amplifies stronger than truth on medias such as Twitter. As rendered earlier, Trumps statements and language is often emotional, angry and simple, characteristics cherished on mediums such as Twitter (Viser, 2015). Versus the lenient, controlled and traditional approach, favored notably by Clinton, who also suffered more from the negativity of the election coverage than Trump. This is amplified by his lenient untruths and through biases such as cognitive dissonance, availability and anchoring, which provides an explanatory model both for Trump's behavior and success.

Two reasons can be found, one in terms of Behavioral Economics and one classical competing strategies. In Behavioral Economics terms, it makes sense to stand out and differentiate yourself from the other contestants. As an availability bias, it was essential for Trump to differentiate himself from the 16 other candidates (New York Times, 2016). Simply by being recognized in the TV debates, on Social Media, through interviews and ultimately in the voting booth gave Trump a clear advantage over the other candidates.

Trump builds the negativity and sense of fear and at the same time he benefits from it. Controversy is a characteristic of Trump. He talks differently than politicians usually do and does not spend time explaining the complexity of American foreign policy, but rather a simple statement or judgement, in this case; 'we have a problem', and how he has the solution to this problem. He talks in images and simple language, in a way that incites our imagination. Exercising emotional control/two-sided emotional expression: "Trump does seem emotionally engaged in a way none of his competitors do; he is perpetually annoyed — exasperated that things aren't as they should be — but somehow also good-humored about it" (Swaim, 2015).

The question now is to what extent Trump and his campaigning efforts can be linked to the explorations into human psychology and decision-making in Behavioral Economics. This practical connection can be seen in the rise and use of Big Data in politics. Companies specializing in profiling, targeting and analysis of political messages, based on Big Data, are becoming more widespread and developed.

6.4 Big Data and Cambridge Analytica

“The connectivity that is the heart of globalisation can be exploited by states with hostile intent to further their aims. (...) The risks at stake are profound and represent a fundamental threat to our sovereignty. - Alex Younger, head of MI6 (Cadwalladr, 2017).

“Big data companies already know your age, income, favorite cereal and when you last voted. But the company that can perfect psychological targeting could offer far more potent tools: the ability to manipulate behavior by understanding how someone thinks and what he or she fears” (Confessore & Hakim, 2017).

Since the advent of the internet, a revolution in data and communication has taken place. Companies and organizations have access to mountains of data on anything from preferences on cereal to political affiliations. The trend has been to organize the data gathered from cell phones, browsers, TV recording devices, Social Media, etc. and put it to use. One such trend is psychometrics, the measure of aptitude, personality traits, abilities and convictions, based on vast sets of data and thousands of data points per person, and target not just specified audiences but individually crafted messages, so-called microtargeting. The idea is to craft specific messages, deliver them and personalize them on an individual basis.

One such company specializing in big data mining and microtargeting is Cambridge Analytica, which played a role in the Brexit campaign in the UK, initial Republican primary campaign of Ted Cruz, and after he withdrew, in the campaign of Donald Trump. Two of CA's principals are eccentric millionaire Robert Mercer, an avid conservative and supporter of Donald Trump, and Steve Bannon, Trump's Chief Strategist, former VP of its Board of Directors and who stepped down from this position when he joined the Trump campaign in August 2016. Bannon is one of the key people in the Alternative Right movement, the former editor at Breitbart a conservative/alt-right website, as his chief strategist. Ivy league educated and a former Goldman Sachs employee, who got tired of Wall Street and went into the entertainment industry, ending as editor of conservative online news site Breitbart News.

Their unique selling point is the use of behavioral microtargeting in a model for personality type called the OCEAN model. The acronym stands for Openness, how much you enjoy new experiences; Conscientiousness, how you prefer plans and order; Extraversion, whether you like spending time with others; Agreeableness, your ability to understand other people's point of view; and Neuroticism, how much you tend to worry (Cambridge Analytica, 2016; Nix, 2017).

Using the OCEAN model and up to 5.000 data points per person, Cambridge Analytic claim to accurately reveal “hidden voter trends and behavioral triggers”, and enabling political campaigns to target individual voters with customized messages aimed at mobilizing a certain behavior. This can be everything from enforcing an already established belief and support for one candidate, to deliver custom campaigns to the individual voter's social media accounts, to demotivate them from voting altogether (Cadwalladr, 2017). One chief data scientist at a company that offers ‘emotional analysis’, and has been active in the French presidential elections, said that; “You can do things that you would not have dreamt of before. It's sharing the thinking and the feeling behind this information, and that's extremely powerful” (Confessore & Hakim, 2017).

Companies such as Cambridge Analytic actively use the insights from Behavioral Economics to target, not just specific audiences but specific people with custom messages aimed at triggering a certain response. The accessibility of vast amounts of data has given companies a tremendous insight into our minds and can target campaigns specifically to each individual voter and consumer. They do not just predict interests and future behavior, the psychometric profiling enables them to predict what motivates people, what makes them change their mind and decide on one outcome over another (Kaltheuner, 2017). It can implicitly make you buy certain products and influence the outcomes of elections without anybody realizing it.

Cambridge Analytica and similar companies are controversial and their methods, effects and results heavily scrutinized and contested (Bershidsky, 2016; Doward & Gibbs, 2017). The use of political profiling and psychometrics is not a new phenomenon, citing one Obama 2008 spokesperson on the issue; “[w]e knew who ... people were going to vote for before they decided”, and in the 2016 Elections, all major candidates used some form of it (Politico, 2016; Kaltheuner, 2017). But as the technology matures and become more and more accurate, while at the same time remaining invisible to those exposed to it, little doubt remains that it will play a crucial role in politics and elections in the years to come.

7. Discussion

7.1 Foucault on Behavioral Economics

“Power relations are both intentional and nonsubjective. If in fact they are intelligible, this is not because they are the effect of another instance that ‘explains’ them, but rather because they are imbued, through and through, with calculation: there is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives. (Foucault 94/95)

As the experiment suggests, Behavioral Economics can certainly explain Donald Trump as a phenomenon, and show how it both informs him and transgresses him. Trump displays an intricate understanding of the insights that can be generated from Behavioral Economics. However, Behavioral Economics lack the ontological framework for understanding and explaining its own ontology. In order to better understand the role and influence of Behavioral Economics, it will be analyzed in the next section and compared in terms of Foucault’s idea of the exercise of Power, specifically his notion of the Panopticon as a laboratory of Power.

The Panopticon, like the experiment with Behavioral Economics, can be seen as a privileged laboratory where the influences of certain stimuli can be carefully examined and analyzed. Foucault describes it as;

“The Panopticon is a privileged place for experiments on men, and for analysing with complete certainty the transformations that may be obtained from them. (...) The Panopticon functions as a kind of laboratory of power. Thanks to its mechanisms of observation, it gains in efficiency and in the ability to penetrate into men’s behavioral knowledge follows the advances of power, discovering new objects of knowledge over all the surfaces on which power is exercised” (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 204)

At first glance, it could seem like the Panopticon perfectly substitutes with Behavioral Economics. That Behavioral Economics and the Panopticon describes two sides of the same effect on human behavior and that only the onset separate them. However, Behavioral Economics is solely the description and subsequent influence of human behaviour, but it does not reflect or aim on influencing subjectivity. The object of the Panopticon is exactly that, to transform the criminal into the citizen.

Interestingly, the most (in)famous of Foucault’s conceptions of power, the Panopticon, was the invention of the founder of the classical conception of the individual as a rational economic being, namely Jeremy Bentham. The Panopticon was designed to illustrate the perfect prison, i.e. the prison that alters the subjectivity of the criminal into the well-behaved citizen. The prisoners learn to correct and inspect themselves in the Panopticon. By its very design, the prisoners supervise themselves, they become their own attendants, they become docile bodies of the Panopticon. The panopticon itself does not define a certain normativity, by its design makes the prisoners regulate themselves. It does not as such dictate how the prisoners should behave, yet forces them to behave in a certain way. Foucault describes the effect as;

“He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in Panopticism which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. By this very fact, the external Power may throw off its physical weight; it tends to the non-corporal; and, the more it approaches this limit, the more constant, profound and permanent are its effects: it is a perpetual victory that avoids any physical confrontation and which is always decided in advance.” (Foucault, 1977/1995, pp. 202-203)

Behavioral Economics works like the Panopticon, it both describes a certain behaviour and yet corrects it. In the application of a Behavioral Economics apparatus, it forms its subjects, those who are subjected to its logic, and make them a docile object of the stimuli-response-logic. This logic is incapable and as a power it is exercised over individual in the entire economy. Behavioral Economics in its mapping and description of behavior, is the continuous attempt to optimize the exercise of power, to maximize its effect and to expand its reach. In the terms of Foucault, Behavioral Economics can indeed be seen in the analogy of the prison but not of walls and prison guards, rather of scientific authority and a certain influence on behavior. By its virtue, like in Foucault's analysis of Neoliberalism, Behavioral Economics cannot be the governmentality itself. It must maintain a lateral relationship with the government (Foucault, 2004, p. 286).

It is in this lateral role, adjacent to the governing, that Cambridge Analytica can be found. The idea in Cambridge Analytica is the perfect experience of the Panopticon, that through the constant information the governing can adapt and adjust the experienced policy or statement of the politician to whatever drives the highest audience, sells the most products, gets the most votes. It grants complete control of the political environment.

Because of the lacking normativity, Behavioral Economics and the political economy like it, need to be outside the government, it needs something or someone to set the course. It verifies or falsifies the governmental practice but it does not become it. It can explain a phenomenon like Trump, but Behavioral Economics does not reflect upon its own ontology, and as a result does not have a normative idea of what behavior should be. As envisaged by Cambridge Analytica, they do not reflect on what they are doing or if it is the right thing to do. They make target individuals, using the insights from Behavioral Economics, with their innermost motivations to do whatever will get the most votes.

Individuals respond to stimuli, but Behavioral Economics neglects to reflect on the self-disciplinary effects of the Panopticon, which fosters a certain subjectivity aimed at maximizing utility. Foucault describes how the introduction of the prison system that the state began to systematically gather information on its citizens (Foucault, 1977/1995, p. 281). The prisoner or criminal does not exist *a priori*, but is constructed using the information gathered by the state. The prison is induced with the object of transforming the subjectivity of the criminal to the citizen in the most effective way.

Cambridge Analytica, which utilizes the insights from Behavioral Economics, can inform, guide and evaluate Trump's statements. The Panopticon is the most efficient way of producing a certain subjectivity, and Cambridge Analytica and Behavioral Economics present the most efficient way of targeting a political message. To Cambridge Analytica, areas such as *Prospect Theory*, Heuristics and Biases, as discussed in earlier chapters, are just refinements of the Panopticon, of the way Power can be exercised upon us. However, it does not reflect on its own moral principles.

The disciplinary force exercised by these is not intended to transform prisoners into well-behaved citizens, but to make us buy, use and vote. It is the description of an elaborate set of control mechanisms that altogether form a modern Panopticon, perhaps far more intricate than could have ever been envisioned. Any behavior can to some extent be 'rationalized', that is, systematized and used, by such an analysis but this is done without any consideration of normative evaluation or of its own stance on normativity versus scientific objectivity. Behavioral Economics as well as the political economy are dependent on a practice of government, on a sovereign that can steer the ship rather than analyze and describe.

7.2 Latour on the state of modern politics

Latour's thinking concerning the scientific foundation of the social sciences, can heighten the understanding of the underpinnings of Trump. This is to be an extension of the experiment using Behavioral Economics and serves to clarify the understandings from the analysis.

As a tool for mobilizing political action, fear as a way of framing messages can have a tremulous impact. Politicians, not limited to Trump, have used fear to accomplish goals that could not have been met by other means. However, the study of the use of fear in politics often falls short of describing or even recognizing its own ontological challenges. As noted earlier by Bruno Latour and his dismantling of the effect of scientific authority, it can be hard to distinguish fear as a factor from the influence of scientific authority. Latour notes that "Milgram's torture does not prove they [students he examined] harbored some built-in tendency to violence, but demonstrates only the capacity of scientists to produce artifacts no other authority can manage to obtain, because they are undetectable" (Latour, 2004, p. 210).

To some extent, Trump has mobilized a critique similar to that of Latour, by questioning the foundation of the factuality of modern media. What Trump did so brilliantly was to discover that a *fact*, is indeed nothing but a construct and only did what most medias have always done and come up with a strong narrative of answers rather than questions. Truth, as will later be elaborated by Foucault, is in no way a fixed entity but a political object, and it is always possible to question the current state of truth. Fear and irrationality are not the opposite of rational truth. This is what has posed the main problem for the analysis of Trump and the modern forces of populism, that they insist on an objective, non-political truth, that either has been completely undermined or perhaps more accurately, never existed.

In the analysis of Trump with Behavioral Economics, the terminology used to describe the phenomenon, and in the case of Trump, do not need to be worked reflexively or answer to an essence, as Behavioral Economics utilizes a direct and causal logic in the scheme *stimuli-response*. If Trump is viewed as *authentic*, and that notion has a traceable effect on his constituents, then it is of secondary importance whether he is actually being authentic or not. In Latour's reflection on what is the body, it is not the *essence* as a substance, i.e. what is a body by nature, or what is authentic by nature, but rather *an interface that becomes more and more describable as it learns to be become affected by more and more elements* (Latour, 2004, p. 210). In the experiment and in Behavioral Economics, it is not the notions of fear, authenticity, truth and fact as *essence* that are important but rather how they can be said to affect the body of the electorate. Trump has developed these entities around his political persona and they did indeed effect the body of the electorate. By not relating these notions to any eternal essence, it is possible to describe not what fear, fact and authenticity is but how they are.

If viewed as a fundamental condition for human existence, fear can become a poor explanation for seemingly political ‘irrationality’. The established dichotomy of irrationality versus rationality is no longer operable in the context of Trump and modern populism, because it is a constructed dichotomy. Likewise, a large part of the social sciences approach to examining the effect of fear in politics, one such experiment was how hypothetical superpowers like impermeability could be moved in a more liberal direction or those that examine the prospects of monetary compensation for disobedience to other authority³, perhaps display the completely wrong grasp of what fear is to the individual. The notion of fear as being the same to all and the opposite of reason is simply wrong. Examples like these do little more than describe how Republicans and Liberals feel about superpower, and to actually explore the effects of it in politics, one must let go of the dichotomy of irrational fear versus fact, and explore how these entities operate by themselves.

Trump and other populists are by no means the first to use people’s tendency to act on emotions or fear, rather than complexity or rationality. The media have spent decades rooting a sense of fear in the minds of people. They have established a premise of fear, insecurity and uncertainty with no solutions or answers. Trump, and other populists for that matter, only buy into an already established situation of fear and insecurity. While the world is being described as growing more complex, little has been done to come up with a less frightening narrative. This frustration of globalization and the inoperable dichotomy of rational versus irrational has been put to words by Pankaj Mishra, here cited in extract from a book review of his book *Age of Anger*, “Individuals with very different pasts find themselves herded by capitalism and technology into a common present, where grossly unequal distributions of wealth and power have created humiliating new hierarchies “ (Røed, 2017). And a lot of people do not feel they share this ‘common present’ with people half a world away. Growing complexity yields uncertainty, which can be turned into fear. Mechanisms like uncertainty and fear can and have been used as a tactic for Trump and other populists to convey strong narratives.

Latour rejects the notion of scientific superiority and the idea that it reigns over human experience. All ‘facts’ are only the culmination of human experiences and it makes little sense to talk about experiences decoupled from the human experiencing them. Latour opposes the division of scientific statements into true and false, as they would either be redundant or useless (Latour, 2004, p. 215). In other words, we cannot separate the experience of fear and authenticity from the human bodies that experience them. Simply to categorize Trump or the people who voted for him as irrational or driven by fear instead of reason and factuality, is in no way sufficient.

As Røed reflects upon, the fear of terrorism is higher than ever before and perceived as more vital than ever, though previous waves of terrorism have been the case. The media combined with our access to information boosts the effects and goal of terrorism, namely to evoke fear in the minds of those who are terrorized. An availability bias of constant exposure has made the fear of terror and

³ (Laber-Warren, 2012) discuss two studies, one where Republicans are asked to imagine hypothetical superpowers and then evaluated to be less influenced by fear. The conclusion is almost comical as it notes that “[T]here is some range within which people can be moved”, as if superpowers is a necessary condition of changing people’s political view. The other experiment is described as; “participants had to say whether they would do these deeds for money and, if so, for how much—\$10? \$1,000? \$100,000? More? Liberals were reluctant to harm a living thing or act unfairly, even for \$1 million, but they were willing to betray group loyalty, disrespect authority or do something disgusting, such as eating their own dog after it dies, for cash. Conservatives said they were less willing to compromise on any of the moral categories” (ibid.). Completely neglecting the paradox of comparing people’s moral impunity to monetary gains. This branch of research still has a long way to go in explaining the ontological foundation of emotions in a non-tautological or non-paradoxical way.

the insecurity stronger than ever and Trump and other populists have been able to create a much stronger narrative of how to cope with the rising challenges of uncertainty and globalization. One who also saw the dangers of a person like Trump in American politics is philosopher and literate Noam Chomsky;

“The United States is extremely lucky that no honest, charismatic figure has arisen. Every charismatic figure is such an obvious crook that he destroys himself, like McCarthy or Nixon or the evangelist preachers. If somebody comes along who is charismatic and honest this country is in real trouble because of the frustration, disillusionment, the justified anger and the absence of any coherent response. What are people supposed to think if someone says, ‘I have got an answer, we have an enemy’? There it was the Jews. Here it will be the illegal immigrants and the blacks. We will be told that white males are a persecuted minority. We will be told we have to defend ourselves and the honor of the nation. Military force will be exalted. People will be beaten up. This could become an overwhelming force. And if it happens it will be more dangerous than Germany. The United States is the world power. Germany was powerful but had more powerful antagonists. I don’t think all this is very far away. If the polls are accurate it is not the Republicans but the right-wing Republicans, the crazed Republicans, who will sweep the next election” (Hedges, 2010).

A time of moral and practical upheaval presents an opportunity for populists with simple answers to complicated problems, as they can thus designate a clear path and a strong narrative to cut through the noise. Although, Chomsky’s reflection is more dim and pessimistic so far, he accurately describes the rise of Donald Trump in American politics. Regarding the initial description on honesty and charisma, Chomsky is on par with the view of Trump of his supporters. Trump’s say-it-as-it-is and perceived authenticity may not be shared with his opponents and critics but that does not make it any less real to his supporters.

Trump is authentic because he does not operate in the rational/irrational dichotomy. The problem which populists explore has to some extent been that different articulations have not found ground, and that *statements* have taken over instead of *articulation*, that nuanced understandings of the discrepancies have given way to a simple truth-versus-lies-logic. There has not been room for a proper disagreement on normative ideals and in the scientification of politics, social science has become dull in its search for objectivity through statements. The frustration has been lived and felt, first by the supporters of Trump and subsequently by the established, so-called elite, as populism became a political reality.

This is the pivotal point of the frustration of many journalists and mainstream media today. If social science is and can only be statements that simply describe, but do not add to the world, it will be rendered redundant, as the new “(...) virtual world far prefers the outrageous, the new, the controversial to the normal routine of reason and verification” (Sherer, 2017). If social science falls trap of being reduced to the accurate description of the world but it science should allow for constant scrutiny and “immensely increase the price at which good science can be purchased” (Latour, 2004, p. 210). Truth, in the perspective of Latour is only the lowest bar for what can be called social science, and the critical normative aspect is its ability for *maximum disputability* and *articulation* of differences. It must again become *risky*, *bold* and *interesting* (Latour, 2004, p. 216).

Latour's view of the normative stance of social sciences is both challenging and problematic. On one hand he criticizes the experiment of Milgram for only displaying 'scientific authority', and next he calls for science to be more risky and bold, as if the findings and conclusions of Milgram were not these things. And it is questionable if the social sciences would be better off competing for the attention of the masses on social media, rather than sticking to strict requirements of objectivity and truth. However, the fascination of social sciences and the quest for strict objectivity seems to be equally damaging as the world moves away from objectivity and towards plurality of facts. What is perhaps needed is a better educated public to navigate the rising complexity and face uncertainty.

As such, Trump has been able to explore the increasing weakness of the poor social science of statements, but neither he nor the social sciences allow for the *articulation* of opposition. Science and politics need to rule out the non-operative truth-fact-logic and reintroduce a normative stance of what is good and bad science and politics.

7.3 Foucault on Trump

If one person could be said to be the incarnation of the changing rules of truth and power, it is Donald Trump. It is tempting to think of Trump as an institution of the traditional understanding of power, as a Leviathan from which stems power, truth and political order, one who has been allowed to define his own reality. His use of Twitter is delusive as it at the same time is transparent and hidden. In the Panopticon, the more transparent the system becomes, the stronger the influence on the individual. The Panopticon as a metaphor for other institutions in society, equally adapts to Trump's use of Twitter and his seemingly tacit understanding of modern epistemology. Combined with the work of Cambridge Analytica, the Panopticon becomes more than a mere metaphor. Foucault's analysis of power and truth can provide an understanding of this convergence.

It is here important to recall Foucault's line of thought, that truth and power do not converge, they do not become the same thing. As Foucault notes on the characteristics and boundaries of the rationality of power;

The rationality of power is characterized by tactics that are often quite explicit at the restricted level where they are inscribed (the local cynicism of power), tactics which, becoming connected to one another, attracting and propagating one another, but finding their base of support and their conditions elsewhere, end by forming comprehensive systems: the logic is perfectly clear, the aims decipherable, and yet it is often the case that no one is there to have invented them, and few who can be said to have formulated them: an implicit characteristic of the great anonymous, almost unspoken strategies which coordinate the loquacious tactics whose 'inventors' or decisionmakers are often without hypocrisy" (Foucault, 1998, pp. 94-95).

It is this logic behind Donald Trump which can be deciphered and uncovered. The more explicit and transparent, the stronger is the exercise of power. Through his use of Twitter, his views are always explicit, always accessible, yet hidden in the media itself. It is both far more complex yet more simple than the Panopticon. As noted by Byung-Chul Han, the power of the Panopticon lies in its architecture, in the distinction between periphery and outer sphere, this distinction is completely broken down in the transition into Psychopolitics and has made the Panoptic machine much more efficient (Han, 2015, pp. 45-46). As he notes, "Therein lies its perspectivism, which founds the structure of power

and domination. While occupants of the Benthamian panopticon are aware of the supervisor's constant presence, the inhabitants of the digital panopticon think that they are free" (Han, 2015, p. 46). This is the pivotal point of the behavioral experiment, that Trump with the tools provided by Cambridge Analytica undetected can influence the behavior of individuals, who will not experience anything but a free choice. There is a clear and decipherable strategy behind it and these actors can undetected alter and manipulate the experience of truth by directly targeting individual voters with the exact messages which will influence their behaviour.

The information to guide the messages has already been freely provided by the individuals; Cambridge Analytica and Trump are not outside the population looking in through the prison. The distinction between the outside and the inside does no longer exist. His 'facts' may not check out, but the reality they create is real.

" The important thing here, I believe, is that truth isn't outside power, or lacking in power: contrary to a myth whose history and functions would repay further study, truth isn't the reward of free spirits, the child of protracted solitude, nor the privilege of those who have succeeded in liberating themselves. Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its "general politics" of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true" (Foucault, 1984, p. 54).

Both Behavioral Economics and Trump exercise forms of power in the sense that truth gravitates around them and are influenced by them. Trump in his ability to define his own reality with manipulation of 'facts' and his use of 'alternate truth', and Behavioral Economics as part of a certain game of science, which inform and influence behaviour. Trumps use of alternative facts do not offer an actual alternative set of facts, but serve the purpose of distracting and distorting what is important. They are his tools for controlling the discourse and hiding the big lie hides in small one. As put accurately by Michael Sherer of Time Magazine; "Trump has discovered something about epistemology in the 21st century. The truth may be real, but falsehood often works better" (Sherer, 2017).

Rather than saying that Trump is wrong, given certain 'objective criteria for truth', the point is to ask what are their effects, or more precisely to explore how truth links to power in the phenomenon of Trump? Herein lies a hint of his influence, his exercise in the use of Cambridge Analytica and Behavioral Economics, in the ability of his to be elected, despite the resistance of the established political system, to guide our attention to wherever he wishes.

Within the realm of the Trump phenomenon, it is not meaningful to point out the inconsistencies of his many statements and policies, as that is the objective of them, to diverge our attention. Rather it is to undercover and decipher this logic behind Donald Trump. For Trump, as will be elaborated in the discussion, there does not seem to be any of these inconsistencies. For him, his logic is closed and complete. Herein lies the indication of a system of power, where a full set of logical dependencies exist and where Trump express an intricate understanding of epistemology in the 21st century. It sticks deeper than merely pointing out inconsistencies, untruthfulness and manipulation in his statements and policies for, as stated by one of his biographers;

“You have to understand, Donald creates his own reality. Whatever Donald says at the moment is, to Donald, the truth. And he believes his own stuff. And this is partly Carson’s⁴ problem. You know, there’s no objective reality out there. You know, Carson doesn’t seem to understand it took an enormous army of multiple countries to defeat the Nazis. He thinks a group of persecuted [sic] people with, you know, small weapons are going to stop the Nazis. But this is very typical of Donald, and his views are highly flexible depending on what he sees as his momentary negotiating advantage” David Cay Johnston (Johnston, 2015).

The object of Trump is not only his will or determination to become the President of the United States, which seem almost as secondary objective, instead he displays a much more powerful will to shape his own reality, and to invoke a stronger narrative of answers rather than questions. This astounding hypocrisy is a striking characteristic, as it marks the system of power to those outside of it. This kind of action is not a sign of lacking intelligence or carelessness, rather it reflects a very good understanding of modern media, how the human mind works, and how to get the attention of both.

For Trump, in his system of thought, there does not seem to be these inconsistencies which may seem obvious to the rest of us and, it does not seem to have a great effect to point to these inconsistencies, rather it seems to strengthen the resolve of him and his followers. These inconsistencies, careless behavior and seeming ignorance are not the sign of lack of intelligent behavior, they are signs of intentional, strategic action, aimed at directing our attention.

He may be an indicator of a devolution of morality but he alone does not define truth. He expresses an intricate understanding of how truth works, what it can do and what it cannot do. He has questioned the established regime of truth, and the statements which distinguish true and false. What he does is not to propose a different set of facts, rather it is a different narrative altogether.

7.4 The Psychopolitics of Trump

The whole economic history of capitalism would be different from what it is if new ideas had been currently and smoothly adopted, as a matter of course, by all firms to whose business they were relevant. But they were not. It is in most cases only one man (the entrepreneur) or a few men who see the new possibility and are able to cope with resistances and difficulties which action always meets with outside of the ruts of established practice (Schumpeter, 1947).

Trump’s vision presents a difference in modes of narration which can be further explored by Byung-Chul Han, who in his analysis of Plato’s cave claims that Plato distinguishes not between different modes of cognition, but of different modes of living. A scholar of Foucault, he describes how Plato’s cave can be seen as a theater of “narrative and cognitive modes of existence. Plato’s cave is a theater. In the allegory of the cave, the theater as a world of narration stands opposed to the world of insight” (Han, 2015, p. 38). The cave is driven by narration and only outside the cave can we experience naked truth. In the cave, things are not joined by causality or logic but by scenography and dramaturgy, by narrative rather than fact or reason.

⁴ Ben Carson, Secretary for Housing and Urban Development under the Trump Administration

In this division, there is no room for the poet in Plato's city of Truth, the poet being the manifestation of illusion and narration which exists in the cave and will not be granted access to the city. The city of truth is for Han a metaphor for modern society of mass information, but information "(...) lacks all negativity. It amongst to a positivized, operations language" as he continues, "More information and communication alone do not illuminate the world. Transparency also does not entail clairvoyance. The mass of information produces no truth. The more information is set free, the more difficult it proves to survey the world. Hyperinformation and hypercommunication bring no light into darkness (Han, 2015, pp. 39- 41). There are two kinds of blindness in Plato's cave. The one which comes from leaving it and going into the light and the one which comes from returning to the cave.

What has been forgotten in the hyperreal world of information technology and scientific politics, and what Chul Han points to in his analogical analysis of Plato's cave, is that narration, theater and dramatology are just as persuasive and just as real, as the bare-naked, blinding information which is outside the cave and the one who returns to the cave enlightened, will be just as blinded as the ones going outside for the first time. It is not that the world in the cave is any less real, or any less valuable and important. Morality exists in the community and not in the individualized society of information. Scientification, globalization and individualization provide few answers to how to live and leads to frustration, a frustration that can be exploited by people like Trump who cut through the noise and provide easy answers to complicated questions. He distracts people from the problems of society by blaming the others, the establishment, the foreigners, the government but he too does not have the answer, which serve the tactic of entertainment and misdirection.

Panopticon as a physical prison is part of the old disciplinary power, revolving around the physical body, but the digital Panopticon is centered around the psyche, the information provided by companies such as Cambridge Analytica and the access to the minds of the voters. Data is an efficient psychopolitical instrument, which grants excessive knowledge of the social dynamics of mass communication. It is a knowledge of domination, that enables the entry to the psyche and influences behavior on a pre-reflexive level (Han, 2016, p. 34). Behavioral Economics as the theory and Cambridge Analytica as the actuator remain passive and unreflective about their own lacking normativity. Racism is a heuristic and Trump's xenophobia and hostility towards minorities is as much a result of neoliberal social order, as it is a diagnosis of it. It resonates because in the society where all are their own entrepreneurs, one can only blame oneself and bear the shame, or blame the other, the foreigners, minorities and the misfits. In a completely 'free' society, society itself can no longer be blamed for the failure of the individual to realize itself.

Microtargeting is data-driven Psychopolitics (Han, 2016, p. 92). It is the eradication of the difference between, the divergence of votes and purchases, and citizen and consumers. Trump is the culmination of the commercialization of politics, and as consumers of politics, rather than participants in democratic public community, Trump satisfies the raging thirst for scandal, demasking and entertainment, which has been substituted for public politics. Politics used to be the affairs of the politicians, now it is just pure entertainment.

Chul Han raises an important diagnosis and critique of the notion of transparency and information leading to more truth. More information and transparency become almost incompatible with truth, which in turn in its purest form only blinds us and provides no answers. His notion about the poet, denied access to Plato's city of truth echoes the analysis made by Chomsky on the rise of a charismatic character in American politics, and the Schumpeterian entrepreneur. The election ultimately became his reality show and aided by the insights from Behavioral Economics, he became the host.

He built his political agenda on answers to questions that were not asked, bonded together, not by facts but by narration. His parole of “Make America Great Again” is a narrative answer that speak to masses of people who feel their voices have not been herd, yet as an answer, it is critically unclear what the question is. Commercials do not make *sense*, and we do not buy the products because of it. The convey an emotion and a narrative that people respond to.

Trump represents the ultimate sign of commercialization, the creation of products to solve problems which are only realized by the product themselves. Joseph A. Schumpeter’s original idea of the capitalist entrepreneur as the cause of an optimistic force of creative destruction, “the essence of capitalism”, a force that changes the old to the new, rings hollow today as creative destruction has become the destruction of the creative (Schumpeter, 1943, p. 105). The ultimate entrepreneur is the poet. It is he who converge data driven information, Psychopolitics, Behavioral Economics and narration. Trump is the poet and entrepreneur, who by his cunning can assume any shape and imitate all things, the entrepreneur who pushes the borders of capitalism. The poet creates his own reality that does not adhere to logic, reason and truth, but captivates through narration.

From the outside, pointing to the inconsistencies will only strengthen the resolve of those already in the cave, “For Trump’s allies, this a measure of strategic brilliance, not defective character. He understands how to make something an issue and elevate it the discussion by saying things that are contrary, perhaps even unproved. He has the ability to change the subject to what he wants to talk about” (Sherer, 2017). Pointing out the inconsistencies have no effect because narratives, from fairy-tales to commercials, do not adhere to logic or reason but to emotions and beliefs.

In other words, in contemporary politics it becomes impossible to distinguish truth from poetry. The followers and supporters of Trump do not react because of his lies or alternate facts, but because of his narration. This is not done without a considerable danger as the narration does not necessitates morality, but possess a tremendous risk to the proclaimed adversaries of the fiction of the cave. As “Trump’s alternative reality is dark, divisive and pessimistic, and it tends to position him and his supporters as heroic victims of injustice”, no one knows what the next act will bring (Sherer, 2017).

8. Conclusion

Economics have become an increasingly powerful tool in politics, both for analysing and for operating in an ever-complex political landscape. It is the reduction of behaviour to numbers, evidence and statistics and seems to work and what easily be understood, mediated and used by politicians. The initial framework of Behavioral Economics provided an alternate understanding of why the seemingly blabber and inconsistent performances of Donald Trump had such a powerful effect on voters. Through the lens of biases and heuristics such as Cognitive Dissonance, Representativeness, Availability, Recognition and Anchoring to name a few, Behavioral Economics constituted the malettes à odeurs, which enabled a different articulation of the phenomenon.

The Stenger-Despret falsification principle elaborated by Bruno Latour describes a new normative standard for the social sciences to be bold, risky and challenge established dogma. It served as an inspiration to push the boundaries of understanding both for the phenomenon of Donald Trump but equally how Behavioral Economics could be used in an experiment to generate new understandings of a said phenomenon. What was before uncategorizable became articulable and gave a systemic framework for understanding the behaviour of Trump and its effects, not in terms of reason and truth but in terms of stimuli and responses. Whether intentional or not, Trump displays an intricate understanding of the insights from Behavioral Economics in his statements, and through his employment of the Big Data analysis and communication tools from Cambridge Analytica.

Modern technology provides a thorough and transparent understanding of behavior and for the first time, companies, organizations and other actors can reach every single individual in the digital world with microtargeted messages. The connection between the insights from Behavioral Economics are both a useful way of understanding Trump, as well as seem to have informed his campaigning efforts. It is however difficult to decipher the extent to which Behavioral Economics drive the politics and policy of Trump and the extent to which it is a completely contingent, random process. As such, Behavioral Economics provided a productive way of understanding the phenomenon of Trump but only served as one possible explanation to him and his success.

The effects of Behavioral Economics were discussed using Foucault's reflections on effects of the Panopticon. An analogy was made between the Panopticon and Behavioral Economics, in order to discuss the effects on subjectivity and the consequences of Big Data companies such as Cambridge Analytica. Behavioral Economics claim to do little more than describe behavior, but in the hands of companies like Cambridge Analytica, it does so much to alter subjectivity and impose a certain normativity and undetectably shape our reality. This diagnostic was explored, aided by Chul Han's reflections on Psychopolitics and the impact of mass information, communication and the extended realm of freedom and transparency.

The new techniques of neoliberal power have become subtle from the bodily, docile subject of the panopticon to the indirect digital prison. Freedom and seemingly free will become tools of companies and political forces by which subjected by themselves, individuals have internalized and are aligned with the logic of optimization, self-rationalization and submission.

The discussion with Chul Han points to the collapse of the existing dichotomy between truth and false, and how phenomena such as Trump show that more information does not lead to more truth. In his analysis of Plato's metaphor of the cave, Chul Han explores how the different states which exist inside and outside the cave, represent different modes of existence. Dramatology, theater and

narration are equally real and equally valid, yet equally deceptive. Within these, logic, reason and truth are irrelevant and can be whatever the poet says it is. This expansion of neoliberalism is indicated with the destruction of the creative, the divergence of entertainment and politics, and its ultimate star Donald Trump.

The discussion leads to the inference that increased individualization and access to information has not held the promises of more truth. Rather, it has led to the transformation of voters to consumers and politics to entertainment. The ultimate figure of this transformation is the Entrepreneur and poet; he who can assume any shape and imitate all things. Trump has indeed discovered something about epistemology in the 21st century; falsehood binds reality together just as much as truth.

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