

EDITORIAL

with Dawn Brown

A fact remains a fact

When I was young, I was taught it was wrong to lie. In fact, lying was something my mother hated. A trait we share. Not only is someone trying to convince you of something that isn't true, but there's the added insult that said individual must think you're stupid to believe the whopper they're laying on you.

Now, that's not to say I've never told a lie in my life. There are, after all, varying degrees of lies. The white lies you might tell to avoid hurting someone's feelings. A fib to downplay a situation. Or an exaggeration to drive home a point. They are still lies, though, and we know it.

However, it seems there's a new term out there making the rounds—Alternative Facts. But, you might be saying, I didn't think there could be such a thing as an alternative fact. To which I would respond, you're right. A fact is a fact, and by its very definition—a thing that is known to be true, or exist—does not leave room for an alternative version of itself.

Well then, how did this term come to be?

In the first press conference after Donald Trump's inauguration, Press Secretary Sean Spicer claimed there was inaccurate reporting about the crowd size at Trump's inauguration

"This was the largest audience ever to witness an inauguration, period," Spicer said, after a lengthy mathematical estimation of how many people could have been in the crowd. "Both in person and around the globe."

He went on to accuse the New York Times of releasing a photograph misrepresenting the crowds attending.

In an interview with Counselor to the President Kellyanne Conway, NBC's Chuck Todd asked why the President would have his Press Secretary in his first address claim a "provable falsehood." To which, Conway responded, "Sean Spicer, our Press Secretary, gave alternative facts."

Huh?!

Incidentally, Spicer has since stated that he said it was the largest audience attending in person *and* watching globally, not just attending in person. Though, that does leave one to wonder why he offered up so many reasons for why it might have looked like there were less people in attendance than at Obama's inauguration.

But I digress.

Here's the thing. There's no such thing as alternative facts. We can't just tell ourselves what we want to hear and claim it's a fact.

One of my all time favourite books is George Orwell's 1984. And while the ideas of reality versus perception presented are delightfully chilling when safely between the two covers of a book, when enacted in real life the implications are truly disturbing.

Whatever your political leanings, a fact remains a fact, a lie is a lie, and we have responsibility to acknowledge the difference. Otherwise, the day may come when we believe that two and two make five.

Who's afraid of the big bad Trump



By
Angela Tyler

The other day, the little guy heard the morning news as he was getting ready for school. He mentioned something about the now President of the United States of America, Donald J. Trump. Little J immediately piped up, "Don't worry mommy you don't have to be scared of him." I make no attempt to hide my dislike for Trump even around our kids even though the adults of our household are divided on this subject. "I'm not scared of Trump," I informed her adding "I'm afraid of what will happen when he becomes President." She looked at me and asked "When is he becoming President?" The answer was tomorrow, however what I wished I could have said was never.

Last Friday, although I swore I would not watch the inauguration, while at the dentist, I was inflicted with watching the formerly prestigious historical ceremony turned ego-driven reality show. I listened to him swear on several bibles and I reluctantly listened to his speech which he apparently wrote himself. In my opinion, this, if at no other time, is one when perhaps a professional speech writer needs to be—if nothing else—consulted. After listening to him speak, I came to the conclusion that he'd said nothing and there was absolutely no doubting he did indeed write his speech himself.

At the end of the day, social media and new headlines bol-

stered pictures and stories of the inauguration and the several balls removing the man who lost the popular vote and replaced him with a sense that Disney magic fairy dust had transformed him into Prince Charming and his wife into Cinderella. I returned to how my day started with my children telling me I don't have to be scared while I really do worry about what was promised during his campaign and what is expected to happen over the next four years.

In his first days some of the things he has done besides continue his now two Twitter accounts:

Issued an executive order aimed at rolling back former President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act. Halted a reduction to the annual mortgage insurance premiums borrowers pay when taking out government-backed home loans.

Received a key legal OK from the Justice Department for Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner to take on a role in the White House.

Trump's nominee for CIA director, Kansas Rep. Mike Pompeo, contradicted his earlier testimony and said he was open to revisiting limits on interrogation techniques including waterboarding if his intelligence officers think it is needed.

Announced he has meetings with leaders in Mexico and Canada to begin re-negotiating NAFTA.

Signaled a shift in the Justice Department's civil rights efforts when it requested a delay in the lawsuit over a Texas law requiring voters to present certain types of government-issued IDs.

Issued executive orders to withdraw from the Trans Pacific Partnership trade deal negotiations, as well as executive order on abortion and lobbyists who want to work in the White House.

Signed executive actions to advance approval of the Keystone XL and Dakota Access oil pipelines.

Let us also not forget that one day after his Presidency began, millions of women took to the streets to protest his Presidency which apparently is only just the beginning.

Some are saying things like, "let's see what he really does" (thinking what his campaign said compared to what he will actually do and somehow it's going to turn out all sunshine and roses). Maybe I am over reacting? Maybe those millions of women protesting were wrong? Maybe my worry for the world my children are growing up in is unfounded? We have four years to see what will transpire and hopefully our Canadian economy will survive and hopefully our elected officials are strong enough for our country.



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PUBLISHER/EDITOR

Ted Tyler

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Traci Gardner

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS

Dawn Brown, Trish Bell, Jane Dougan, Vivien Fleisher, Harry Rudolfs, Les Schmidt, Mark Thomsen, Angela Tyler

ADVERTISING AND CIRCULATION: Marie Shadbolt

PRODUCTION: Iain Brennan

TYPESETTING: Jessica Wilson

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379 Queen Street East
Acton, Ontario L7J 2N2
519-853-0051 Fax: 519-853-0052

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email: thenewtanner@on.aibn.com

deadline: Monday at 5 p.m.

EDITORIAL :

email: tannereditor@bellnet.ca

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