Book Review

The Politics of Language, by David Beaver and Jason Stanley. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2023. Pp. xii + 508.

The Politics of Language is a massive accomplishment — novel, nuanced, and timely. While it is not a short or easy read, it constitutes a significant advance in the nascent philosophy of social meaning. It is especially impressive for its rich synthesis of disparate literatures from outside of analytic philosophy, ranging from information theory to social identity and critical race theories. It departs from orthodox theories of meaning in prioritizing audience uptake over speaker production and the alignment of emotional affect and social identity over the rational exchange of information. It thereby offers a fertile resource for explaining a wide range of phenomena that are typically ignored by philosophers and linguists, such as gestures, music, and monuments. It also offers a powerful tool for illuminating the politics of language, understood not just as speech produced by politicians or about politics, but all speech – indeed all action – that involves communal coordination and contestation.

At the same time, in their zeal to offer a radical, 'non-ideal' alternative to orthodox philosophy of language, Beaver and Stanley deny some of the orthodoxy's genuine insights, especially about aspects of communication that stem from our treating each other as rational agents, and aspects of language that stem from its role as a system for building complex structures out of discrete parts. Together, these produce a distorted description of the role that literal meaning plays in communal negotiations about communicative responsibility. And this in turn limits the ability of Beaver and Stanley to diagnose and combat the malign speech practices they are most concerned to elucidate.

In §1 I sketch the view's primary moving parts, hoping to demonstrate the richness and scope of its architecture and to advertise its relevance for analysing social meaning. In §2 I probe its normative implications. Beaver and Stanley criticize the orthodoxy for employing an inappropriately idealized model of speech as rational, cooperative, and neutral. While I agree that much speech fails to fulfil this ideal, I think idealization of some kind is inevitable. Further, the 'Gricean framework' has more explanatory resources, and Beaver and Stanley themselves are in greater need of such resources than they admit.

1. Resonance, attunement, and harmonization

Beaver and Stanley paint their theory as an antidote to the standard 'content delivery' view of meaning developed by Grice, Lewis, and Stalnaker. On the standard view, communication is a matter of speakers intentionally packaging neutral information into discrete utterances, relying on a joint assumption of common inquiry to enable their interlocutors to recover the information they intended to impart. By contrast, Beaver and Stanley take communication to be a matter of speakers intuitively manifesting perspectivally loaded modes of inhabiting the world in order to induce more integrated collective identities. They construct this alternative by replacing orthodox concepts like reference and common ground with information-theoretic analogues embedded within a framework of social identity theory.

Their most basic notion is *resonance*: an entity *e* resonates with a feature *F* in a context *C* to the degree that tokenings of *e* are correlated with an increased probability of *F* in *C*. Resonance, like reference, links one entity to some other aspect of the world. But unlike reference, the kinds of entities that can be resonant include bowls of soup as well as sentences; the features to which those entities can resonate include emotions like comfort and social structures like families as well as individuals and properties; and the mechanisms that maintain resonance include correlations as well as intentions. *Attunement* is an analogue of sense or concept: a quasi-perceptual sensitivity to *e*'s resonance with *F* (p. 51), producing a predictable behavioural effect (p. 70). Both resonance and attunement are defined relative to a *practice*: a habitual, socially significant form of behaviour (p. 76).

Resonances, attunements, and practices tend to cluster into complex patterns. Thus, if you pronounce 'pin' and 'pen' equivalently, you are also more likely to use 'ya'll' than 'you', to order grits after church on Sundays, and to know how to shoot a gun. By contrast, if you pronounce 'cot' and 'caught' equivalently, you are also more likely to use 'hella' than 'very', to drink kombucha after yoga on Sundays, and to know how to surf. (Perhaps in each case you are also more likely to vote in certain ways.) Resonances, attunements, and practices are also typically multi-layered. Most obviously, linguistic practices of conjoining morphemes into sentences are deployed in the service of practices like asserting and challenging, which are deployed in practices like inquiry and protest. But similarly, non-linguistic practices like dancing and drinking are deployed in the service of practices like partying, which are deployed in practices like networking.

At least some attunements and practices are essentially collective, the group is more attuned to the triggering conditions than any individuals are, and/or the practices themselves cannot be instantiated individually (p. 93). A group of individuals forms a *community of practice* to the degree that there is a high probability of their practices clustering into similar patterns and being instantiated in similar circumstances (p. 96). A group's *common ground* is its pattern of collective attunements (p. 87). An *ideology* is a kind of common

ground: an interwoven system of collective affective, cognitive, perceptual, and behavioural attunements (p. 105).

When something – anything – happens, the context changes. In the short term, this activates certain attunements and downregulates others, depending on what has happened and the surrounding context. Over time, repeated patterns of activation shift the system of attunements itself (p. 119). *Harmonization* is the process of restoring stability to a system of attunements, on analogy to the orthodox notion of update. Beaver and Stanley define harmonization as the 'mutual support' of co-activation among attunements (p. 160). They take the most important factor driving harmonization to be the maintenance of a stable individual and collective social identity (p. 120), where the sort of 'mutual support' involved in harmonization can conflict dramatically with truth-conditional consistency. In particular, they emphasize the ubiquity of narratives as a tool for inducing harmonization (p. 146), and of fragmentation as a means of maintaining harmonization in the face of cognitive dissonance (p. 145).

Beaver and Stanley take *communicative* events and practices to have 'the function of creating a dependency between the attunements of individuals, to produce connection' (p. 214). A central positive goal of their book is to explain aspects of meaning that escape interlocutors' intentions and awareness, which they call *hustle*. Because a system of attunements always outstrips explicit cognition, all communication – indeed, all action – involves some hustle, on one or both sides. As every parent knows, hustle can be beneficial. But as everyone who lives around others also knows, hustle can be malign and/or malicious (p. 330).

Because it lurks in the background, presupposition is especially ripe for hustle. Where the standard model analyses presupposition in terms of warranted inferences about speaker commitments that escape commitment-cancelling linguistic constructions like negation, and explains hearers' tendency to adopt those commitments by pointing to hearers' rational acceptance of them, Beaver and Stanley treat projection as any case of an attunement 'tunnelling in' from the global context to a local one that blocks at least some other attunements (p. 234). So, for instance, all English speakers are attuned to tokenings of 'the *F*' registering collective attunement to a salient object of joint attention (p. 233); many English speakers who token 'caffe mocha' are individually attuned to nearby Starbucks locations; and some English speakers who token 'inner city' are collectively attuned to a racist, anti-Black ideology (p. 223).

Beaver and Stanley analyse the *presuppositional resonance* of an entity *e* as its differential boost to a resonating feature *F*'s probability in *C*, minus the probability of *F*'s itself being caused by *e* (p. 220). (The latter is *e*'s 'primary effect'.) They analyse *presupposition accommodation* as harmonization triggered by a communicative interaction's perceived background context (p. 255); and they claim that interlocutors harmonize in a way that optimally balances social conformity against individual distinctiveness (p. 264). In simple cases, accommodation involves taking on the speaker's manifest perspective (p. 259). In

more complex cases, hearers harmonize negatively, by downregulating attunements and practices displayed by the speaker; or they harmonize positively along some dimensions (say, political orientation) and negatively along others (say, gender) (p. 272). The process of accommodation is nuanced, intuitive, and ongoing, typically involving unreflective micro-adjustments to speech style like intonational pitch and rate, lexical register, and syntactic structure – as well as non-linguistic patterns of dress, gesture, and so on.

Beaver and Stanley argue compellingly that short-term accommodation in the service of harmonization – both positive and negative, and often well outside the scope of propositional claims, explicit attention, or intentional control – is a core engine of long-term linguistic, social, and especially political change. In particular, most communicative interchanges activate multiple systems of attunement simultaneously, and so most local harmonization also shifts broader relations among those systems' associated communities of practice. Youths start tokening 'hella', using vocal fry, and wearing Bermudas to harmonize with surfers' chill vibes; hunters stop tokening 'conservation', shift their diphthongs to monophthongs, and trade in their rifles for AK-47s to differentiate from lefty environmentalists. Because linguistic practices are so thoroughly enmeshed in broader practices of social attunement and harmonization, Beaver and Stanley conclude that 'the robustness and flexibility of human language rest not on the infinite generativity of fixed individual grammars, but on a social trait of humans, accommodational adaptability' (p. 277).

2. Idealization, explanation, and accountability

When we step back, Beaver and Stanley's theory of meaning contrasts in provocative and productive ways with the orthodox theory. Meaning for them is *scalar* (defined in terms of degrees, as opposed to sharp categories); *perspectival* (defined in terms of holistic cognitive, affective, and behavioural associative networks, as opposed to discrete, truth-conditional, propositional information); *social* (defined in terms of collective states, as opposed to individual reflective beliefs); and *dynamic* (defined in terms of local and global context-change potentials, as opposed to static, abstract propositions).

I emphatically agree that we need a theory of what we might call social meaning, that social meaning exhibits these four features, and that their analysis explains many otherwise puzzling and/or troubling phenomena. (The book is peppered with insights about topics like the dangers of driving under the influence of talk radio and why cult leaders are so weird.) It is less clear that it suffices as a foundational theory of meaning writ large, or that it explains the distinctive contours of our actual linguistic practices.

A central negative goal of *The Politics of Language* is to show that the orthodoxy traffics in unfounded idealizations that marginalize and devalue key aspects of our speech practices. However, idealization – roughly, ignoring

known complexities and introducing simplifying distortions – is unavoidable in theorizing about any complex domain, just for the sake of descriptive comprehensibility. In this sense, all theory is ideal theory. When it comes to theorizing about meaning, idealization also plays a more robustly normative role. As Wittgenstein taught us, any adequate theory of anything like meaning must explain how things can go *wrong*, understood not just as variation from a typical case but as a kind of failure. And for Beaver and Stanley, as for many contemporary speech act theorists, this involves explaining, not just when and why utterances are false, but 'how speech can be harmful, violent, or dangerous' (p. 362).

On the orthodox model, things go right when a speaker presents a hearer with a vehicle that represents a true piece of information, and they jointly believe it to be true; assessments of harm are treated as a separate issue, to be dealt with by ethics and/or political theory. Beaver and Stanley take this model to presuppose the ideals of *neutrality*, *cooperativeness*, and *straight talk*. While the orthodoxy acknowledges that not all speech satisfies these conditions, it treats such cases as 'non-ideal'. For Beaver and Stanley, this implies that non-canonical cases are treated as exceptions to a 'pure core'; that they are analysed derivatively, as 'practical applications' under special conditions; and that they are not just marginal but deviant (p. 369). Beaver and Stanley claim that these ideals are empirically falsified by the pervasiveness of hustle. Moreover, following Keiser (2022), they claim that the orthodoxy's reliance on a pure core of neutral, cooperative straight talk to assign semantic meaning and explain pragmatic reasoning prevents it from generating any analysis of hustle at all. Instead, they conclude, 'If we seek an explanation of how linguistic communication functions, we must have a model that treats hustle and straight talk on a par' (p. 349).

I'll explain below why I think the orthodox model can do more to handle non-ideal speech than Beaver and Stanley allow. But first, I want to explore how Beaver and Stanley can explain cases where things go wrong by their lights. Where the orthodox model focuses on representations, intentions, and truth, Beaver and Stanley focus on associations, affect, and social identities. More fundamentally, where the orthodox model resides in the realm of reasons, theirs dwells in the domain of probabilities and causes: resonance is a species of correlation, akin to Gricean natural meaning and Peircian indexicality; attunements are behavioural dispositions grounded in sensitivities to such correlations; and practices are predictable patterns of behaviour grounded in such sensitivities.

Beaver and Stanley's descriptions of these correlations, sensitivities, and behaviours are themselves highly abstracted and idealized. But they do not yet deliver a criterion of correctness, whether couched in terms of truth, utility, justice, or any other value. Making room for meaning to go *wrong* requires providing a metasemantic principle which specifies a privileged class of cases where things go right, and then leveraging it to assign meanings to non-canonical

cases. Philosophers today typically define this principle in terms of a constitutive functional role. For instance, teleosemanticists like Dretske (1981), Millikan (1984), and Shea (2018) analyse beliefs as having the functional role of tracking information, and use this to assign meanings to mental states – and in Millikan's case, language. (Although their notion of resonance is remarkably similar, Beaver and Stanley do not mention teleosemantics, or criticisms by Fodor (1990) and others.) While different teleosemanticists specify their privileged class in different ways – Dretske invokes learning; Millikan evolution; and Shea causal explanation – they all identify ideal conditions in which their preferred constitutive functional role is fulfilled, and then exploit the pairing of mental states and worldly circumstances in those conditions to assign contents to mental states in contexts where the function misfires. This is also Lewis's metasemantic strategy: 'straight talk' is the canonical condition in which the functional role he posits for communication – information exchange – is fulfilled.

What, then, is Beaver and Stanley's meaning-constituting ideal condition? Given the sketch in §1, the most obvious answer is that the core functional role of a mind is to maintain the individual's social identity by updating their system of attunements; and the core functional role of communication is to maintain a collective social identity by strengthening dependency relations among individuals' attunements. Communicative practices derive meaning from their actual causal role in conditions where this collective communicative system fulfills that function. And individuals should and generally will behave in ways that maintain their identities in the face of events interpreted in terms of meanings assigned in terms of their functional role within those communicative practices.

Beaver and Stanley recognize that theories which ground meaning in social behaviour in this way risk collapsing into a 'a relativist abyss in which all communicative acts are epistemologically equal, none cleaving more tightly to reality than any other' (p. 324). But where some social-behaviourist meaning theorists, like Kripke (1982), Rorty (1991), and Brandom (1994), embraced the consequence that whatever the social group calls 'true' is true, Beaver and Stanley think they can retain a 'robust realism'. We can acknowledge that our own assessments of when a community's practices track truth are perspectivally loaded, they say, without including truth itself as a parameter of the contexts we describe and assess. And if we don't relativize truth, then we can hold on to the idea that some ideologies, like science, are more directly grounded in resonances that reliably track actual differential probabilities (p. 324).

While I agree that perspectivism is compatible with at least a moderate realism (Camp 2019), I'm not clear how this addresses the main relativist challenge facing Beaver and Stanley. To assess truth in the terms they propose, they need to privilege a 'pure core' of scientific ideology that tracks differential probabilities which they can use to groundi meaning-constituting resonances, attunements, and practices. On what grounds can they privilege a statistically

rare 'pure core' of scientific ideology as meaning-constituting? On the one hand, if sarcasm, jokes, bullshit, and the 'firehose of falsehood' spewed by the likes of Putin, Steve Bannon, and Chris Rufo are as pervasive as Beaver and Stanley maintain, why doesn't this render them vulnerable to a version of Keiser's (2022) objection to Lewis? For instance, if utterances of sentences like:

(1) President Obama, he is the founder of ISIS. He is the founder in a true sense.
(2) They use their media to assassinate real news. They use their schools to teach children that their president is another Hitler…The only way we save our country and our freedom is to fight this violence of lies with the clenched fist of truth.

are in fact systematically embedded in communicative practices that are reliably attuned to resonances between words like 'founder', 'true', and 'assassinate' and ideologically loaded perceptions and behaviours, as they appear committed to claiming, then why isn't the most functionally relevant semantic interpretation one on which (1) and (2) come out as true? Alternatively, if Resonance Theorists can identify non-gerrymandered, statistically robust assignments for those words which are grounded in actual practices of attunement to actual statistical dependencies plus actual practices of composition according to which (1) and (2) come out as false, then why can't a Lewisian appeal to those same practices in the service of an orthodox truth-conditional semantics?

More fundamentally, I'm not clear why truth is relevant for assigning meaning on their model at all. If what is 'significant for a conversational interaction' (p. 43) is harmonizing attunements to collective practices of social identity maintenance, then this would seem to be the relevant criterion for individuating contexts and assigning meanings. And if agents are indeed reliably disposed to act in ways that perpetuate a collective social identity; if such behaviour fulfils the core function of communication; and if the most efficient way to fulfil that function is to utter sentences like (1) and (2), then on what grounds can Beaver and Stanley treat those utterances as malfunctioning or wrong, even if they do find a way to classify them as false? If such utterances successfully implement the functional plan of collective harmonization, why doesn't might make right?

Thus, I take it that everyone must face the challenge of isolating a metasemantically privileged, meaning-constituting subclass out of the pervasive morass of hustle. At the same time, I think this challenge can be met, because I don't think idealization requires identifying a statistically robust 'pure core'. Much as Millikan proposes that sperm function to fertilize ova because that is what they do in statistically rare but evolutionarily explanatory 'Normal' conditions, and that beliefs function to track informational correlations even if

they are frequently false, so can a Lewisian – or a Resonance Theorist – assign semantic values by appeal to statistically rare contexts of 'straight talk'.

One might worry that an explanatory appeal to Normal conditions still begs the question of why we should privilege 'straight talk' (or fertilization) as an ideal in the first place. Partly for this reason, I prefer to ground a metasemantic appeal to sincere, literal, explicit speech in our practices of negotiating about meaning. This is emphatically not because speakers generally try to 'talk straight'. Rather, much as Strawson (1962) takes the reactive attitude of resentment for ethical wrongs to reveal an implicit commitment to agential freedom and responsibility, I take our practices of assigning and avoiding interpretive blame to reveal an implicit commitment to a regulative ideal of truthfulness and trust. In particular, I think we observe a commitment to these normative ideals at work in strategic contexts, in the ways that speakers carefully *avoid* speaking fully literally and explicitly, toeing right up to the line of violating norms of truthfulness and relevance while preserving minimal cooperation and 'plausible deniability'. I also think we observe it in the more robust kinds of censure that hearers levy for outright lies as opposed to merely misleading statements and insinuations (Saul 2013, Camp 2018a).

Beaver and Stanley take plausible deniability to establish precisely the opposite conclusion. They treat it as a reason to reject the 'Gricean framework' wholesale, because they take plausible deniability to involve the 'absence of complete transparency about whether an inference was intended', without which 'Gricean reasoning doesn't warrant pragmatic inferences' (p. 340; cf. Keiser 2022, p. 54) or even the assignment of literal content (p. 331). However, the assumptions that Gricean coordination requires complete transparency, and that plausible deniability requires the absence of transparency, are themselves wildly over-idealized. (They are also not grounded in Grice; Green 1990.) Thus, in the classic study probing plausible deniability, respondents judged it to be 100% certain that a direct offer was intended as a bribe, but 99% certain that a thinly veiled, deniable offer was (Lee & Pinker 2010, p. 801). A requirement of absolute certainty about communicative intentions that rules out all deniability would prevent us from holding most speakers accountable for things they manifestly did mean. As jurists have recognized, this would have significant practical consequences. In particular, it would render legal culpability 'powerless against the ingenuity of threateners who can instil in the victim's mind as clear an apprehension of impending injury by an implied menace as by a literal threat' (*United States v. Malik*, 1994). This is why United States law employs a significantly weaker standard, on which speakers are criminally and/or civilly liable for unsaid messages – for example, threats, incitement, defamation, bribery, and harassment – if and only if that message is one that any *reasonable* hearer would have taken them to have meant in that context (Camp 2022).

So, I take it that ubiquitous strategic speech is compatible with a Gricean analysis – indeed, that we need a Gricean analysis to explain the contortions that speakers get themselves up to in strategic contexts. I am also unmoved

by another of Beaver and Stanley's main motivations for rejecting the Gricean framework – that it requires reflective, reflexive intentions. I agree that often, 'the way people are affected by an utterance is not so much like the way Sherlock Holmes contemplatively follows a trail of clues, but the way an ant reflexively follows a trail of pheromones' (p. 132). But this is compatible with treating Gricean analyses as rational reconstructions of those intuitive responses and applying those reconstructions to non-linguistic actions, as Grice himself did.

Here, Beaver and Stanley's lack of engagement with third-wave sociolinguistics and Rational Speech Act theory is especially striking. Theorists like Penelope Eckert, Judith Degen, Heather Burnett, and Elin McCready share Beaver and Stanley's strategy of exploiting probabilistic correlations and broadly Bayesian models to analyse micro-practices of linguistic style as expressive and social signals. Under the hood, both treat communicative agents as computational systems that update credences to produce goal-optimizing behaviour – in effect, repurposing the core engine of rational-choice orthodoxy in the service of different goals and wider information channels. However, where Beaver and Stanley invoke Claude Shannon, Leon Festinger, and Emile Durkheim in the service of social contagion, these theorists appeal to C.S. Peirce, Erving Goffman, and Paul Grice in ways that highlight and enrich the role of rational agency in social coordination.

Because computational optimization models are so abstract and idealized, they are vulnerable to worries about explanatory traction, Are they nothing more than just-so stories? Why do things ever go wrong if systems automatically behave in functionally optimal ways? These worries are especially pressing for Beaver and Stanley, given that they have appropriated many of the implementational factors that decision theorists usually invoke to explain 'non-ideal' performances, such as attention and fragmentation, as integral parts of agents' functional competence. More fundamentally, given the totalizing scope of their analysis, it is unclear how they can explain normatively *positive* cases in which hearers resist the pheromonal lure of collective harmonization. Suppose that Beaver and Stanley do find a way to assign truth-conditions on which sentences like (1) and (2) come out as both false and ethically wrong. They still need to specify individual and collective mechanisms by which hearers manage to 'keep a clear head' in the face of 'associations that have been seeded by a history of occurrence of words' (p. 152), in order to make a 'free choice' (p. 308) about how to respond – as they claim we sometimes do. They say they are not prepared to endorse a 'dual-systems' model of cognition (p. 135). But they still owe an account of how rational, autonomous interpretation and action are even possible, and how this interacts with the claim that communication is associative attunement all the way down.

I am considerably more sympathetic to Beaver and Stanley's third reason for rejecting the Gricean framework – its restriction to truth conditions. As the case of legal liability for bribes and threats illustrates, philosophers and linguists urgently need to extend our analyses of communication beyond information

exchange. However, so long as we focus exclusively on overall perlocutionary effects, as Beaver and Stanley do, we fail to track the distinctive species of action engendered by speech. People can incentivize and intimidate each other in many different ways, including by 'just saying' information about future events and consequences (Schiller 2021). Implied menaces and insinuated bribes communicated in this way may be psychologically vivid, and can incur legal liability. But just as lying is worse than misleading, at least *qua* speech act, so is breaking an explicit promise worse than shirking a well-founded implicit expectation, and overtly *tutoying* one's grandmother-in-law is worse than otherwise disrespecting her. An adequate theory of speech acts needs to track the normative differences among implicit and explicit ways of achieving the same perlocutionary effects.

This is not a distinction that Beaver and Stanley are willing to grant. Because they reject the idealization of 'neutrality' and take all speech to be expressively, socially, and motivationally loaded, they refuse to assign distinctively expressive, affiliative, or directive functions to specific expressions or constructions. The implications of this stance are especially striking in their analysis of slurs. Where orthodoxy treats slurs as deviant exceptions with a puzzling projective profile, Beaver and Stanley take them to be paradigmatic cases of communication. They are not just 'grammatically unexceptional' (p. 401) but 'close to an ideal of straight talk', insofar as they transparently do what all speech does, which is enact ideological attunement (p. 423). Slurs are distinctive, they think, only insofar as they draw especially overt attention to especially discriminatory ideologies that trigger especially negative emotions; and slurs' much-discussed 'hyperprojectivity' is merely a symptom of the general insensitivity of attention and emotion to the use/mention distinction (p. 402). However, even if this description of slurs' causal profile is empirically accurate (a claim they admit is unsettled (p. 412)), we still need to explain the distinctive sorts of responsibility that using a slur incurs. Just as with threats and bribes, an ingenious bigot can draw attention to a discriminatory ideology by speaking politely with a nudge and a wink. Using a slur does something more: it undertakes a commitment to that ideology's appropriateness (Camp 2013). Slurs are theoretically puzzling because commitments, and not just causal effects, often – but not always – project (Camp 2018b).

More generally, explaining how speech harms, why it is unjust, and when we should hold speakers responsible requires more than a causal explanation of predictable patterns of collective behaviour. It requires treating people as individual agents who do things for complex, context-specific reasons against the backdrop of sometimes oppressive institutional and social structures. Here, it is notable that while Beaver and Stanley praise feminist speech act theorists like Rae Langton, Lynne Tirrell, and Jenny Saul, they rarely mention the tools that these theorists have developed for diagnosing and countering such discursive harms and injustices.

Overall, I have been arguing that because Beaver and Stanley are so concerned to offer a radical alternative to the orthodox intentionalist,

truth-conditional model, they risk reducing people to causal nodes in a vast self-harmonizing collective, and that this conflicts with an accurate description of our actual speech practices. This should not blind us to the usefulness of their analysis for illuminating the subintentional, statistical effects of speech and social meaning more generally in our cognitive and practical lives. These do fall outside the scope of current philosophical analysis, and of current political and legal liability. We sorely need tools for diagnosing and intervening on such effects when they harm people who don't smoothly harmonize with the collective identity's dominant ideology. And we especially need mechanisms for punishing individual purveyors of 'firehoses of falsehood', and for regulating corporations that amplify attention-mongering bullshit. Beaver and Stanley have developed a rich and promising framework for doing this; but much difficult labour remains.

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