



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on August 21, 2017

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## Fake News Fails to Comprehend

On the July 3, 2017 edition of PBS *NewsHour*, host Judy Woodruff and her guests agonized over a “horrible trend”: Americans do not trust the so-called mainstream media (MSM) anymore. The cause of the PBS panel’s angst was yet another poll showing not only public distrust of the media, but the added insult that more people trust President Donald Trump than trust the media. Salting the wound is the fact that the poll was produced by PBS itself, in conjunction with National Public Radio and Marist Poll.



Woodruff worriedly noted that according to the PBS/NPR/Marist national survey of 1,205 adults, there is “high distrust of the news media.” Only 30 percent of the poll respondents said they had “a great deal” or “a good amount” of trust in the media, as compared to 37 percent who said they had “a great deal” or “a good amount” of trust in the Trump administration. Ouch! That has to hurt; after dumping relentlessly on Trump for months, he not only beats them in the election-day poll, but in the opinion polls as well! Drilling down into the survey data reveals what is, undoubtedly, even more troubling to the liberal Left: The sampling was weighted to include higher numbers of voters identifying themselves as “Democrat,” “Strong Democrats,” and “Democrat leaning independents” than those identifying as “Republican,” “Strong Republican,” and “Republican leaning independents.”

However, the picture — from the standpoint of the worried members of the left-leaning media — is much more “horrible” than even the PBS survey indicates. Woodruff and her Fourth Estate comrades are fully aware that they have been losing trust — and audience share — for years, due largely to their blatant ideological bias. Poll after poll — Gallup, AP, Rasmussen, Pew — has documented the American public’s low esteem for the “prestige” press, the globalist thought cartel that falsely flies under the “mainstream media” banner. A Rasmussen poll in 2013 found that only six percent of Americans considered the major media to be “very trustworthy.” *Six percent!*

But back to the PBS lamentations on this “horrible trend.” Speaking to her colleague, Stuart Rothenberg, Woodruff remarked: “But the bottom line here, Stu, is that the media may be a good whipping boy.” Yes, according to the media spinmeisters, the reason for the widespread — and growing — distrust of the media is that the ignorant, bigoted, unreasonable American public has simply targeted the Fourth Estate as “a good whipping boy” on which to vent their frustrations. It has nothing to do (of course) with the fact that anyone with eyes to see and ears to hear can hardly escape the realization that the unremitting media attacks on Donald Trump over the past year have been unprecedented in volume, intensity, and viciousness. The non-stop, over-the-top, anti-Trump media attacks, however, were merely the final straw for millions of Americans who had become inured to the hard-left media bias on virtually every polarized issue: abortion, gun control, global warming, ObamaCare, homosexual “marriage,” LGBTQ “rights,” transgender bathrooms, immigration-migration, “social justice,” “hate



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speech,” political correctness, and on and on. When President Trump called out the key media organizations as “Fake News,” millions cheered because the charge resonated. Trump’s denunciation clearly describes verifiable reality. However, there is little reason to hope that this wake-up call to the media will cause them to change their ways. Reform is not on their agenda. In fact, every indication is that they are doubling down, becoming even more belligerent and bellicose in pressing the same leftward agenda.

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Returning to *PBS NewsHour*, Judy Woodruff wrapped up the aforementioned segment by focusing on the issue of — “civility.” Ah yes, “progressives” are so concerned about civility. We know that because they talk about it all the time, always in the context, naturally, of how this precious public commodity is being endangered and shredded by Christians, conservatives, Republicans, and “angry white males.” A word search for “civility” on the PBS website yields literally hundreds of entries, including dozens of programs dedicated solely to that issue, with titles such as “Can Civility Survive?” “Text, Talk, and Civility,” and “Civility in Politics,” all supposedly grappling with the thorny issue of how to prevent the continued erosion of our social and political comity.

Woodruff pointed out that the second question in the PBS/NPR/Marist poll asked: “Since Donald Trump was elected president in 2016, do you think the overall tone and level of civility in Washington between Republicans and Democrats has improved, stayed the same, or gotten worse?” She observed that 70 percent say it has gotten worse. The unstated, but implied, message is that it is President Trump and his supporters who are responsible for shattering our civic harmony. The “#NotMyPresident” and “anti-fascist” rioters (along with the politicians, celebrities, and news organizations that promote them) apparently bear no culpability for the turmoil. Stu Rothenberg followed up Woodruff’s remark, commenting that, indeed, “things have deteriorated, they’re coarser, more vulgar; it’s not a time of better tone.” “Well,” Woodruff responded, “we are glad to promote civility here at the *NewsHour*.”

Really? Is that what PBS is always so big on — promoting civility? Granted, their presentation style is more refined and less confrontational, less bombastic than, say, CNN, MSNBC, or Comedy Central, but their content has always been full-tilt to the left — pro-Castro, pro-socialist, pro-abortion, pro-LGBT, pro-Democrat, anti-gun, anti-Christian, anti-Republican, etc. — with nary an apology to, or concern for, the taxpayers forced to fund PBS’ offensive propaganda. Not exactly civil behavior, no? Also rating low in the civility department are the numerous guests and commentators who populate the PBS/NPR universe and who can dependably be counted on to denounce their opponents (and, by extension, millions of Americans) as racists, xenophobes, homophobes, transphobes, Islamophobes, misogynists, fascists, white supremacists — you already know the ad hominem litany.

Out of literally hundreds of examples from the PBS anti-civility grab bag, we can cite, for instance, the shooting of House Majority Whip Steve Scalise and other Republicans, who were gunned down at a baseball practice on June 14. The problem for the anti-Trump media mavens was that the shooter, James T. Hodgkinson, was not only a virulently anti-Trump Democrat, but an avid Bernie Sanders supporter who had worked as a volunteer on Sanders’ presidential campaign. He, reportedly, was very active posting on social media and “belonged to a number of anti-Republican groups, including one called ‘Terminate the Republican Party.’” Evidently, he interpreted his membership in that group quite literally. So how did PBS react to this act of incivility? Why, blame it on the Republicans, of course! But before getting to the blame game, *PBS NewsHour* violated the basic rule that governs most newsrooms:



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"If it bleeds, it leads." In this case, PBS buried the lead story under an avalanche of their usual all-Trump-all-bad-all-the-time "news" and "analysis." Certainly, if it had been a Democrat shot by one of those Republican "bitter clingers" (Obama's characterization) or "deplorables" (Hillary's description), this would have been the lead — and only — story ... day after day after day. However, after burning up nearly all of the *NewsHour's* segment with anti-Trump screed, veteran PBS bloviator Mark Shields pivoted to the Scalise shooting to blame the tragic event on an alleged escalation of uncivil and abusive rhetoric launched by Republican Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich in the 1990s! No mention by Shields of the obvious: the explicit calls to violence against President Trump, his family, his supporters, and Republicans. No mention of the mock beheadings, the burnings in effigy, the riots, the beatings, the threats to "kill" and "assassinate."

PBS, alas, is no outlier in this media bias game. Indeed, everything we have mentioned above fits most of the other major media players as well. Regarding the Scalise shooting, the *Washington Post's* Peter Holley did PBS one better, concocting a bizarre, convoluted rationale that attempted to hold Donald Trump and Bob Romanik, a small-time, pro-Trump radio broadcaster in Belleville, Illinois (the shooter's hometown) responsible for inciting the crime. The *New York Times*, naturally, could not resist the temptation to join the leftist media dogpile. The *Times* editorial board used the Scalise shooting to resurrect the long-discredited charge that former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin was responsible for the 2011 shooting of Democrat Representative Gabby Giffords (which left Giffords severely wounded and six others dead). Palin has initiated a defamation lawsuit against the *Times*, and the paper is now backpedaling to avoid a costly payout.

### **What Bias?**

Reporters, editors, and pundits for the major media typically scoff at charges by conservatives that their news coverage and commentary are skewed with a liberal slant. However, many independent studies have confirmed and quantified the liberal-left bias that virtually any sentient consumer of "news" knows to be the reality when it comes to MSM reporting.

Thomas Patterson, Bradlee professor of government and the press at Harvard University's Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy, is no conservative. His study, "News Coverage of Donald Trump's First 100 Days," released on May 18, 2017, sets the record straight on the bias argument. Patterson based his study on an analysis of news reports in the print editions of the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *Washington Post*; the main newscasts of CBS, CNN, Fox News, and NBC; and three European news outlets (the U.K.'s *Financial Times* and BBC, and Germany's ARD).

President Trump, Professor Patterson reported, "dominated media coverage in the outlets and programs analyzed, with Trump being the topic of 41 percent of all news stories — three times the amount of coverage received by previous presidents."

In its press release summarizing Patterson's study, the Shorenstein Center noted that "Trump has received unsparing coverage for most weeks of his presidency, without a single major topic where Trump's coverage, on balance, was more positive than negative, setting a new standard for unfavorable press coverage of a president." Trump's coverage during his first 100 days, the center reported, "was not merely negative in overall terms. It was unfavorable on every dimension." The study breaks down the negativity on issues such as immigration, healthcare, international trade, terrorism, the economy, etc. "There was not a single major topic where Trump's coverage was more positive than negative," the



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center noted.

Patterson states in his study: “CNN and NBC’s coverage was the most unrelenting — negative stories about Trump outpaced positive ones by 13-to-1 on the two networks.” That finding will not be surprising to anyone who has watched the vicious treatment the president has received from those networks. Nor should anyone be surprised by Patterson’s findings about the other hatchet wielders of the media assassination squad. Trump’s negative coverage at CBS exceeded 90 percent. At the *New York Times* it was 87 percent. The *Washington Post* came in at 83 percent negative.

“Trump’s coverage during his first 100 days was negative even by the standards of today’s hyper-critical press,” Patterson stated. “Studies of earlier presidents found nothing comparable to the level of unfavorable coverage afforded Trump.”

Patterson’s study shows a continuation of the media hyper-negativity toward Trump that was already blazingly evident during the campaign. The Media Research Center (MRC) reported in January of this year, “In the twelve weeks since the party conventions concluded in late July, Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump has received significantly more broadcast network news coverage than his Democratic rival, Hillary Clinton, but nearly all of that coverage (91%) has been hostile.”

The MRC study, which analyzed coverage on all 588 evening newscasts of ABC, CBS, and NBC from July 29 through October 20, 2016 found that Trump was repeatedly “slammed as embodying ‘the politics of fear,’ or a ‘dangerous’ and ‘vulgar’ ‘misogynistic bully.’”

On February 17, 2017, President Trump sent out his immortal tweet: “The FAKE NEWS media (failing @nytimes, @NBCNews, @ABC, @CBS, @CNN) is not my enemy, it is the enemy of the American People!” Whatever one may think of President Trump — and he is a flawed individual with plenty of room for criticism — he clearly hit the bullseye with that call-out. The Fake News organs he targeted have been trying to exact revenge ever since, claiming Trump has declared war on the very idea of a free press, enshrined in the First Amendment. But as the polls show, the American people aren’t buying it; they realize that the globalist media elites are indeed “the enemy of the American People!”



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