



Written by [James Murphy](#) on April 2, 2021

“Fairness Is Overrated”: NBC’s Lester Holt Comes Out in Favor of Media Bias

The top news anchor for NBC News has finally come out and said what we’ve all suspected for decades: While accepting the Edward R. Murrow Lifetime Achievement Award at the 45th Murrow Symposium on Tuesday, Lester Holt eschewed the notion that news consumers should hear multiple sides of a story to determine the truth of a story and declared that “fairness is overrated.”

“I think it’s become clearer that fairness is overrated,” Holt told the audience at Washington State University. “Before you run off and tweet that headline, let me explain a bit. The idea that we should always give two sides equal weight and merit does not reflect the world we find ourselves in. That the sun sets in the West is a fact. Any contrary view does not deserve our time or attention.”

According to Holt, only a few media elites such as himself are qualified to judge such truths. The NBC weekday anchor referenced recent events such as the civil unrest at the Capitol on January 6 and alternate theories about the coronavirus pandemic as examples for why the media needs to dismiss certain stories and opinions and focus only on what the news writers and anchors consider provable truths.

It’s not just a way to micromanage the news agenda either, Holt declared. It’s really the duty of people such as Holt to tell us what and how to think.

“Decisions to not give unsupported arguments equal time are not a dereliction of responsibility or some kind of agenda, in fact, it’s just the opposite,” Holt claimed.

But who decides what is “unsupported,” in Holt’s estimation? If it’s the people in charge of the newsrooms at NBC, CBS, ABC, CNN, or even Fox News, we news consumers shouldn’t be comfortable with that.

Giving all sides to a story is not only unnecessary, it’s also potentially dangerous, according to Holt: He went on to say that “providing an open platform for misinformation, for anyone to come say whatever they want, especially when issues of public health and safety are at stake, can be quite dangerous.”

The duty of reporters, the NBC anchor declared, is to be “fair to the truth.”

The truth as declared by left-wing newsrooms, anyway. And the personalities in some of those same newsrooms were effusive in their praise of Holt’s remarks.



AP Images



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CNN Business's Reliable Sources Newsletter, compiled by Oliver Darcy, called Holt's remarks "a sharp critique of [bothsideism](#)." Leftist CNN White House correspondent John Harwood [tweeted](#) a simple, "Thank you," to Holt.

Others had views that were less "fair" when talking about Holt's remarks. Fox News's Tucker Carlson called Holt's remarks "grotesque."

Tim Graham of the Media Research Center reminded people of Holt's 2017 softball interview of presidential loser Hillary Clinton, in which Holt admitted that he "winced" when Clinton was called dishonest and asked the former secretary of state if she ever got her "feelings hurt sometimes."

Hard hitting, take-no-prisoners reporting there.

Lester Holt: We can't allow an "open platform for misinformation."

Also Lester: Provides open platform for Hillary, says he "winced" when someone called her dishonest. Asked her "do you get your feelings hurt sometimes?" <https://t.co/A8Px4vMBaM>

— Tim Graham (@TimJGraham) [March 31, 2021](#)

Holt went on to acknowledge that his remarks at the Murrow Symposium might "reinforce negative sentiment some hold about journalists."

But the journalist went on to say his remarks speak to a greater truth about the times we are living in. "That we have had to be more direct in our language in recent times only speaks to the volume and gravity of particular statements and claims," Holt said. "Fact checking is not a vendetta. We all have a stake in getting it right."

Speaking of fact checking, left-wing "fact checking" site Snopes has already determined that Holt didn't actually say what he said, calling a headline that claimed the anchor called for journalists to "ditch objectivity" false.

But Snopes is dead wrong. In claiming that "fairness is overrated," Holt did indeed encourage his fellow journalists to dismiss sides of stories that they consider unworthy of their attention. The mainstream media almost universally leans left, while the "truth" that Holt claims to hold in such high regard seldom comes exclusively from that side of the political spectrum.

Ironically, Holt was elevated to the anchor desk in 2015 after his colleague Brian Williams was demoted to the breaking news desk at MSNBC after fabricating a story about how a helicopter he was riding in Iraq was forced down by an RPG.



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