



Media's Relentless Attacks Against Trump May be Backfiring

It wasn't [the Rasmussen poll on Tuesday](#) that upset members of the mainstream media. They have long since written off Rasmussen's polls as biased towards Republicans. So when Rasmussen reported on Tuesday that President Trump's approval rating rose to 51 percent — the third time this year that his rating has been at 50 percent or above — they all but ignored it.

It was the CNN poll from a few days earlier that they couldn't understand. While that poll, covering 913 individuals from March 22 through 25, still showed Trump's approval rating at 43 percent, that was a huge jump from previous poll results. As Newt Gingrich explained, "the result was so shocking that CNN commentator Chris Cillizza, who is normally deeply anti-Trump, had to spend time analyzing [the results] in which the president performed so much better in March than he did in February":

In the CNN poll, President Trump saw big gains with men (8 points), young voters (8 points), middle-aged voters (9 points), and college graduates (10 points). Cillizza called the increases among younger and college educated voters "intriguing," and said they were "most likely" due to the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

It could have something to do with the American people's increasing disgust over the media itself. In its poll released on March 26, Rasmussen reported that "52 percent of likely U.S. voters believe when most reporters write or talk about the president, they are trying to block him from passing his agenda." This, added Rasmussen, was "up from 44 percent a year ago and 47 percent in August."

Gingrich said that the mainstream media's relentless pounding on the president "has begun to vaccinate the American people against its opposition to President Trump." Added Rasmussen, "Just five percent [of those polled] now think most reporters are trying to help Trump pass his agenda, down from 10 percent a month into his presidency."

Trump's improvement in the polls despite the mainstream media's desperate attacks to derail his agenda and diminish his administration's credibility caused a member of that media — one Matthew Walther, writing in the American edition of the liberal British paper *The Week* — to put the blame squarely where it belongs, on the media itself:

It's not surprising that after little more than a year in office many people who voted for a president still support him. But it's also surprising that a president who has been the object of more negative





Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 5, 2018

reporting than any in our history still enjoys something like the same middling base of support he had before taking office.

Unless it's the negative reporting that is the problem, which I suspect is very largely the case.

Walther makes the case that if the mainstream media hadn't abandoned its primary mission as the fourth estate — to bring full-blown fair and honest conversation about current affairs to the public — and instead decided to make its primary, if not only, mission to destroy Trump and his administration, things might be turning out differently:

There was, I like fondly to imagine, a different course that might have been taken here. It is just possible, I suppose, that members of my profession could have exercised their reasoning faculties to decide what in the administration was good, what was bad, what was unremarkable or indistinguishable from what any modern president would do, what was painfully idiotic, what was, perhaps, evil.

We chose not to exercise this responsibility. Instead we decided to indulge in our live-action roleplaying fantasies about being brave selfless journos taking on a mean demagogue because we love the Constitution so much.

The solution, offered Walther, is to stop talking about Trump altogether: "If we want to convince people who voted for him that the president no longer deserves their support, we need to stop talking about him. Or, to be more precise, we need to stop making Trump the universal metric according to which all of human conduct is weighed and considered."

Even if the entire mainstream media changed course immediately and began to cover the Trump administration fairly and honestly, it's probably too late. Its credibility has already been tarnished beyond redemption. As Walther himself noted: "The work of MSNBC and the *New York Times* and *PolitiFact* is complete. Millions of Americans do not know the difference between what is true and what is false and have decided that they do not much care either."

Photo of President Trump: Gage Skidmore

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