

JournoList scandal destroys media's 'unbiased' facade

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The liberal media never tires of telling us how impartial they are.

However, a secret discussion group on the Internet has revealed how several hundred key “unbiased” reporters and editors at *Time*, *Politico*, the *Huffington Post*, the *Baltimore Sun*, the *Guardian*, *Salon*, the *New Republic* and scores of other media conspired together to promote their favorite liberal politicians during the last presidential campaign.

One what was called “JournoList,” editors and reporters joked about their deep hatred of conservatives and, among other things, conferred about how to best protect their candidate from embarrassing revelations, such as the anti-American comments of Obama’s unabashedly racist pastor, the Rev. Jeremiah Wright.

So, it should be no surprise that these same “impartial” news reporting agencies have been completely silent about what would have been a banner-headline scandal. Imagine the outcry should this have involved conservative journalists.

Instead without announcement, *Washington Post* political writer David Weigel was forced to resign when his sneering comments about conservatives were leaked. Embarrassed, media executives ordered their staff members to quit being so candid about their biases.

After all, the false facade must be maintained!

So, where is the outcry?

After the discussion list was shut down, “someone continues to leak information from its archives, providing a fascinating glimpse into how some liberal journalists coordinate their story lines to protect their favorite politicians and ideas,” reported columnist John Fund in the *Wall Street Journal*, one of the few newspapers to acknowledge the scandal.

Several times during the 2008 presidential race, staffers within the mainstream media participated in private outpourings of anger over how Obama had been treated in the media. In fact, notes Fund, they even “in some cases plotted to fix the damage.”

“Spencer Ackerman, then of the *Washington Independent*, now at the Internet newsletter *Wired*, urged fellow journalists to kill the story of Obama’s ties to Wright by going after some of his critics.”

He urged them to attack “Fred Barnes, Karl Rove, who cares – and call them racists,” he urged. “What is necessary is to raise the cost on the right of going after the left. In other words, find a right-winger and smash them through a plate-glass window. Take a snapshot of the bleeding mess and send it out in a Christmas card to let the right know that it needs to live in a state of constant fear. Obviously I mean this rhetorically.”

Accuse them of racism!

What is particularly troubling is that JournoList reveals not just a bias against conservatives, but an active hatred – and a coordinated effort on the part of the mainstream media to elect Obama.

Chris Hayes of the *Nation* magazine urged his fellow journalists to ignore the Rev. Wright story. He insisted the real issue had nothing to do with Obama's pastor and instead "has everything to do with the attempts of the right to control of the country."

Many of the mainstream journalists on JournoList demonstrated what the public has known for years – that the liberals in the press don't hesitate to pursue their own propaganda agenda that has little to do with covering the news. In this case, they were on a behind-the-scenes crusade to protect their liberal candidate friends and to try to ensure liberals could take "control of the country."

Exposed to the light of day, JournoList suddenly shut down. The brief glance at what really goes on behind the scenes has ended.

However, what little has

been revealed is shocking

Thinking only that fellow liberal journalists would read the discussion, one radio producer imagined Rush Limbaugh's death – to the delight of the other list participants. Another wondered why the Federal Communications Commission could not be used to shut down Fox News.

One reporter wanted to smear conservative commentators to destroy their credibility in the public's eye.

"The point is not these people's animus or ignorance or wickedness," writes conservative author Andrew Klavan. "The point is that what they desired was not victory in open debate but *silence* – the silence of censorship, intimidation or the grave.

"When has Rush Limbaugh ever wished a liberal's mouth closed forever?" asks Klavan. "Really, who can deny that Rush would happily argue a point with absolutely anyone anywhere? When has Fox News ever done anything to its rival cable stations but trounce them in a free competition for ratings?"

Discussions on the list also revealed mainstream journalists' annoyance with conservative journalist Andrew Breitbart for breaking the ACORN story – in which ACORN staffers were caught on tape advising a supposed brothel owner on how to defraud the government.

Breitbart has irritated the mainstream media by routinely breaking important stories that the liberals won't touch.

"I don't even know about it," chuckled ABC News's Charlie Gibson well after Breitbart revealed corruption at ACORN.

"I just didn't know about it," said Bob Schieffer of CBS after Breitbart and others in the conservative press revealed possible wrongdoing at the Justice Department in dropping charges against Black Panther thugs who intimidated voters.

The networks also looked the other way when Breitbart decisively disproved allegations that Tea Partiers had hurled racist insults at lawmakers – because they continued to spread the discredited smear.

Former ABC anchor Ted Koppel lamented the “good old days,” when three government-licensed networks served as gatekeepers to what the public could and couldn’t know.

JournoList was started by the *Washington Post*’s reporter Ezra Klein.

His idea was to provide an e-mail list-server for like-minded liberals to hash out and develop ideas. At least 300 and possibly as many as 400 journalists joined the by-invitation-only group.

Most were in the media

Some hailed from liberal academia, think tanks and liberal activist groups. Thinking their comments would remain private, they spoke freely about their hatred of Fox News, conservative commentators, and of their utter loyalty to liberal and Democratic success at the polls.

“What’s inside JournoList may stink, but it’s no surprise that it does,” writes conservative reporter Jonah Goldberg. “JournoList is a symptom, not the disease.

“The disease is not a secret conspiracy but something more like the ‘Open Conspiracy’ that science-fiction writer H.G. Wells fantasized about, where the smartest, best people at every institution make their progressive vision for the world their top priority.

“For a liberal activist that’s forgivable, I guess,” commented Goldberg. “But reporters? Editors? Even liberal opinion writers aren’t supposed to ‘coordinate’ their messages.”

“The real problem with JournoList,” says James DeLong of the American Enterprise Institute, “is that much of it consisted of exchanges among people who worked for institutions about how to best hijack their employers for the cause of Progressivism.

“Thus, the discussion was about how the group could get their media organizations to play down the Rev. Wright affair and help elect Barack Obama. Were I an editor of one of these institutions,” writes DeLong, “I would instantly fire any employee who participated in this gross violation of his or her duty.

“For example, JournoList included *Washington Post* reporters, and the idea that the paper has been turned into a propaganda organ is a big reason it is bleeding readers and influence.

“Of course, it is possible that the *Post*’s editors were on the list, since the complete membership is not known, in which case the corporate executives should fire the editors, or the board should fire the executives, or the stockholders should fire the board.”

“So here, JournoList is composed not of reporters who happen to be ‘Progressives,’ but of Progressives who boast about how to perfect and use their capture of their employers.

“This is in itself institutional rot, but the more serious rot is the failure of the managers of those institutions to react to the problem.”

“Sadly, for those of us who have followed the coverage of Obama’s campaign and his subsequent acts as president, the only surprise is the explicitness of the evidence and how it came to light,” writes DeLong.

JournoList members wrote about being peeved when ABC’s Charlie Gibson and George Stephanopoulos had the nerve to ask Sen. Obama “tough questions” during one of his debates with Hillary Clinton.

NPR reporter, *New Republic* editor

In another discussion, National Public Radio producer Sara Spitz talked about how she would enjoy watching Rush Limbaugh die of a heart attack.

Jonathan Zasloff, a law professor at UCLA, and John Judis, a senior editor at the *New Republic*, talked about whether the federal government should try to shut down Fox News.

“Is anyone starting to see parallels here between the tea baggers and their tactics and the rise of the Brownshirts?” asked Bloomberg’s Ryan Donmoyer – in a reference to the street thugs who propelled Adolf Hitler into power. “Reminds me of the Beer Hall fracas of the 1920s.”

Richard Yeselson, a researcher for an organized labor group, agreed. “They want a deficit-driven militarist-heterosexual state. This is the core of the Bush-Cheney base transmogrified into an even more explicitly racialized, anti-cosmopolitan constituency. Why? It’s all the same old nuts in the same old bins with some new labels: the gun nuts, the anti-tax nuts, the religious nuts, the homophobes, the anti-feminists, the anti-abortion lunatics, the racist-confederate crackpots, the anti-immigration whackos, the pathological government haters.”

This is not just bias against conservatives. This is vitriol toward anybody who dares to resist the liberal party line.

“I’m not saying these guys are capital F-fascists,” added liberal writer Lindsay Beyerstein, “but they don’t want limited government. Their desired end looks more like a corporate state than a rugged individualist paradise. The rank and file wants a state that will reach into the intimate of citizens when it comes to sex, reproductive freedom, censorship, and rampant incarceration in the name of law and order.”

But that’s not what the public wants at all! She’s merely rattled off the goals of liberal propagandists!

All conservatives evil

On JournoList, there was rarely such thing as an honorable political disagreement between the left and right, although there were many disagreements on the left. Conservatives weren’t simply wrong, they were evil – and needed to be destroyed. JournoList members tended to assume that conservatives were acting out of the darkest and most dishonorable motives.

When conservative writer Victor Davis Hanson wrote an anti-immigration piece for *National Review*, for example, JournoList member and liberal commentator Ed Kilgore didn’t address Hanson’s arguments.

Instead Kilgore dismissed Hanson’s article as “the kind of Old White Guy cultural reaction at the heart of the Tea Party. It’s very close in spirit to the classic 1970s racist tome, *The Camp of the Saints*, where white guys struggle to make up their minds whether to go out and murder brown people or just give up.”

“I am genuinely scared” of Fox News, wrote *Guardian* columnist Daniel Davies, because it “shows you a genuinely shameless and unethical media organization cannot be controlled by any form of peer pressure.”

Peer pressure? Did you catch that? Davies can’t understand why Fox News reporters can’t be intimidated by fellow journalists into conforming – why conservative journalists can’t be blackmailed by threats of the loss of friendships and reputation!

Welcome to junior high school!

That gives an insight into the journalistic world today. They are like self-conscious adolescent school students, all worrying their popularity and whether everybody likes them. Davies was irked that the Fox News staff did not cave into such pressure.

“In order to have even a semblance of control,” continued Davies, “you need a tough legal framework.”

Do you understand that? If peer pressure doesn't work, then change the laws so that it is illegal to express conservative viewpoints!

"I agree," answered JournoList member Michael Scherer of *Time* magazine. "You can't hurt Fox by saying it gets it wrong."

John Judis, a senior editor at the *New Republic*, responded that the problem of Fox was "only tactical." In other words – how to shut them down just needed to be more carefully strategized.

So, how much coverage of this embarrassing scandal did you see on the ABC, NBC or CBS news shows? Can you imagine the hour-long specials that would have been aired if these comments had been by conservative journalists conspiring to silence the liberals?

The scandal would have dominated the airwaves and filled the front pages of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *Chicago Tribune*.

But these were liberal journalists.

So, instead, we got only silence.ry.