

THREE THINGS: LET THE TEDIOUS BASHING COMMENCE!

[NB: check the byline, thanks. /~Rayne]

Don't you despise *tedious media bashing* which is often off base? Ha. I'm still laughing about this.

Quick, name five critics of U.S. media.

If you can't rattle off at least five without a lot of thought, there isn't enough media criticism.

We haven't even touched the depths of tedious media bashing in this country let alone at this site.

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Headline and subhead from The New York Times on May 9, 2024:

At a Dinner, Trump Assailed Climate Rules and Asked \$1 Billion From Big Oil
At a private meeting at Mar-a-Lago, the former president said fossil fuel companies should donate to help him beat President Biden.

Headline and subhead from Washington Post on May 9, 2024:

What Trump promised oil CEOs as he asked them to steer \$1 billion to his campaign
Donald Trump has pledged to scrap President Biden's policies on electric vehicles and wind energy, as well as other initiatives opposed by the fossil fuel industry.

Guess who's on the bylines for these two pieces. If you read Marcy's work here frequently you'll be able to take a good stab at it because of the

consistency with which these journalists produce such dreck.

Neither of these articles use the word “bribe” or the phrase “quid pro quo,” and yet that’s exactly what Trump engaged in with fossil fuel companies.

The word “Ukraine” also doesn’t appear though Trump’s first impeachment was kicked off by a whistleblower disclosing a quid pro quo – no association made at all in the articles above with how transactional Trump has been, is, and may be should he win the 2024 election. Readers are supposed to know already just how corrupt Trump’s offer to fossil fuel companies is; they’re not to be so bluntly informed by the two major newspapers in the U.S.

Journalism by shovel. Not just burying the inconvenient, but shoveling bullshit like that POS NYT headline. “*At a Dinner...*” Really? That’s so critical to the public’s understanding of this candidate’s corrupt election behavior that we need to know this was just a harmless dinner?

If readers are surfing headlines to sift for important news to read, prefacing bribery with “*At a Dinner*” is one way to ensure readers speed on by.

So is ignoring the bribery.

Go to Google News and search for “trump oil companies” and compare and contrast headlines and articles since May 9. Amazing the consistency with which the Democrats are assailed for questioning a quid pro quo offered during a campaign event.

It’s ridiculous that it took 16 days to learn that the fossil fuel industry would receive a \$109 billion return on investment if they paid Trump the \$1 billion ~~donation~~ bribe he asked for.

And yes, the Guardian’s piece used the words “quid pro quo” though they quoted Sen. Jamie Raskin in doing so.

Jeff Jarvis, journalism prof at CUNY's Newmark School, is succinct about this particular problem:

Jeff Jarvis @jeffjarvis@mastodon.social

I challenge you to find this good news on the home page of The New York Times. Go to Business and you'll have to dig to find it. "News judgment" is bias... S&P 500, Nasdaq and Dow all hit record highs after encouraging inflation data

<https://www.cnn.com/2024/05/15/economy/consumer-price-index-inflation-april>

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I'll let the NYT's front page speak for itself:

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

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THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2024

Prices in Canada may be higher \$4.00

Fight at NBC Over Left Tilt From MSNBC

Ratings Rise, but Some
Rue a Partisan Shift

By JIM BUTENBERG
and MICHAEL M. GREENBAUM

MSNBC placed a big bet on becoming comfort TV for liberals. Then it doubled down.

Time slots on the cable network once devoted to news programming are now occupied by Trump-bashing opinion hosts. The channel has become a landing spot for high-profile alumni of President Biden's administration like Jen Psaki, who went from briefing White House press briefings to hosting her own show. On Super Tuesday, when producers aired a portion of a live speech by former President Donald J. Trump, Rachel Maddow chastised her bosses on the air.

The moves have been a hit with viewers. MSNBC has knifed past its erstwhile rival CNN in the ratings and has seen viewership rise over the past year, securing second place in cable news behind the perennial leader, Fox News.

But MSNBC's success has had unintended consequences for its parent company, NBC, an original Big Three broadcaster that still strives to appeal to a mass American audience.

NBC's traditional political journalists have cycled between rancor and resignation that the cable network's partisanship — a regular target of Mr. Trump — will cast perceptions of the network in new light. Local NBC stations reporting from the ground, again and again, that executives in New York do more to preserve NBC's reputation brand, but MSNBC's blue-state bent alienates their red-state viewers.

Even Comcast, NBC's corporate owner, which is both in interviews in news coverage, took the rare step of conveying its concern to MSNBC's leaders when some hosts and guests criticized Israel as the Hamas attack was unfolding on Oct. 7, according to three people with knowledge of the discussions. An abrupt course correction in that coverage followed.

This account of the tensions rolling NBC and its corporate overseers is based on interviews with more than two dozen people with knowledge of the company's inner workings, almost all of whom insisted on anonymity to share details of internal discussions.

MSNBC declined to make its top executives available for interviews. The chairman of the NBC Universal News Group, Cesar Conde, has said he wants to be seen on — which encompasses MSNBC, CNBC, a digital streaming service, Telemundo and journalistic stalwarts like "Nightly News," "Meet the Press" and "Today" — to be a big tent.

Yet his recent efforts to include more conservative voices on the airwaves generated newswoman suspicion and ultimately led to an embarrassing rebellion over the hiring of Ronna McDaniel, a former Republican Party chair who added Mr. Trump's attempt to overturn his 2020 election loss.

MSNBC hosts, for their part, Continued on Page A27



Security officials scrambled after getting Prime Minister Robert Fico of Slovakia into a car and tackling a suspect behind a metal barrier.

A Flirty 'Chelsea' Asked for Nudes. It Was a Trap.

By SARAH MASLIN NIB

The Instagram message popped up from a girl named Chelsea. "Howdy?"

David didn't know anyone named Chelsea, but he clicked through her profile. She had brown hair and a nice smile; under her name was a quote from the Bible. He thought it was sort of weird that she was messaging him, a stranger, in the middle of a weekday, but her pretty selfies made that easy to ignore.

He was hesitant when she asked him to chat, but soon her flirty messages escalated to a volley of explicit pictures, and David, a 32-year-old pharmacy techni-

Sextortion Is Targeting Boys and Young Men, Sometimes Fatally

lowers with whom he shares a last name — his family, "he said, "I'm demanding \$500. If not, I'm going to send it to all of those people," said David, who asked that only his middle name be used to protect his privacy. "Then she started a countdown."

But there was no Chelsea. The real person behind the account, David said, was a man who, over the course of three freight days, inadvertently revealed he was in Nigeria as he demanded hundreds of dollars to keep David's pictures private. As he paid up, David joined the thousands of other people cowed under a new scam that has exploded over the

Slovak Premier Is Gravely Hurt By a Gunman

This article is by Cassandra Vinograd, Andrew Higgins and Richard Price.

A gunman shot Prime Minister Robert Fico of Slovakia, who is known for defying his fellow leaders in the European Union, multiple times at close range on Wednesday in the most serious attack on a European leader in decades.

Mr. Fico was shot after emerging from the House of Culture in Bratislava, a town in central Slovakia, as he headed to a nearby hospital. He was rushed to another hospital for emergency surgery.

Hours later, the deputy prime minister, Tomas Taraba, told the BBC that Mr. Fico's situation was no longer life-threatening, and he expected the prime minister to survive.

The gunman, identified by Slovak news outlets as a 71-year-old poet, was immediately wrestled to the ground by security officers.

The interior minister, Maroš Šefcovic, said at a news conference that Mr. Fico was shot five times and that the initial evidence "clearly points to a political motivation." Asked to name the attacker, he said, "Not today."

The attempted assassination shook fears that Europe's increasingly polarized and venomous political debates had tipped into violence.

Mr. Fico began his leftist but over the years shifted to the right. He served as prime minister from 2010 to 2018 and from 2022 to 2023, before returning to power in elections last year. After being ousted

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ANNA WEINSTEIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Putin's Message Takes Hold

A display of captured tanks helps sell the idea that Russia is fighting the West and winning. Page A5.

When Did Everything Turn Into a 'Journey'?

By LISA MILLER

Drew Barrymore has been talking with Gayle King about her penitence "journey" and the soccer phenom Carl Lloyd has just divulged her fertility "journey." By sharing her breast cancer story, Olivia Munn has said she hopes she will "help others find comfort, inspiration, and support on their own journey."

A recent interview with Anne Hathaway has been posted on In-

Once More Experience, Now So Much More

healing, grief, friendship, mentoring, and therapy — often selling courses, supplements or eating plans as if they were talismans to help safeguard their path.

"Journey" has decisively taken its place in American speech. The word holds an upshot utility these days, signaling struggle without darkness or detail, and expressing — in the broadest possible way — an individual's experience of trials over time.

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If a Menendez Is Corrupt, It's Ms., Defense Says

By BENJAMIN WEISER
and TRACEY TULLY

A lawyer for Senator Robert Menendez on Wednesday laid blame for the bribery charges the senator faces squarely on his wife — a woman he found "stunning" but who, his lawyer said, had her past life finances and the source of her newfound income hidden from him.

The gold and some of the cash that the F.B.I. found in a search of the senator's New Jersey home —

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Finger-Pointing as Trial for Senator Begins

ers to give her," the lawyer, Avi Weitzman, told a jury in opening statements at the start of the senator's federal corruption trial in Manhattan.

The gold and some of the cash that the F.B.I. found in a search of the senator's New Jersey home —

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INTERNATIONAL A4-12

Polarizing Royal Portraits

A painting of King Charles is far from the first rendering of a British monarch to get a mixed reception. PAGE A6

Strife Over Jet Quotas

North Macedonia is trying to ensure diversity with hiring quotas, but critics say the system isn't fair. PAGE A4



NATIONAL A13-25

PEN America's War of Words

An organization devoted to free speech faces questions about its response to the conflict in Gaza. PAGE A23

Murder Trial Transfixes Boston

Passions are swirling around the trial of a woman accused of murdering her police officer boyfriend. PAGE A3



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An Inexhaustible Energy

The techno pioneer Jeff Mills's new LP tries to approximate the experience of traveling through a black hole. PAGE C1

No Monkeying Around

Why is the long-running "Planet of the Apes" series so gripping? Because it takes things seriously. PAGE C1



BUSINESS B1-6

Big Donors Warm to Trump

Wall Street's biggest names appear to be increasingly on board for a second term, despite disparaging comments they made in the past. PAGE B1

Trash-Talking Golf Star

As Scottie Scheffler has risen to No. 1 in the world, he has worked to tame his competitive fire. But those who've seen it have stories they love to tell. PAGE B7



THURSDAY STYLES D1-6

A Display of Heritage

Native Fashion Week, held in New Mexico, showed the diversity and poverty of Indigenous designers. Above, the designer Proksha Bhatt. PAGE D8



OPINION A26-27
Cyrus R. Vance Jr. PAGE A27

You can see today's front page at
https://cdn.freedomforum.org/dfp/jpg16/lg/NY_NYT.jpg

Coverage of the internal friction about the appearance of ideological bent between parent NBC and cable subsidiary MSNBC makes the front page. So does a sextortion piece (which could have been run any time in the last year), and a puff piece about everything becoming a "journey" for celebrities.

The NYT's online front page is fresher but no

better. At 10:25 a.m. as I wrote this, the word "inflation" didn't appear at all.

Plenty about Biden's loss of donors and Trump leading Biden in polling.

Can't imagine why coverage of ideological bent in reporting is above the fold at this newspaper.

~ 1 ~

CNN announced the moderators for the June 27 presidential debate. Jake Tapper and Dana Bash, hosts of CNN's Sunday talk show State of the Union are queued up.

Doesn't sound like CNN handled this well in past, blaming the institution for confusion about the venue.

You'll find all the posts at this site tagged with "Jake Tapper" at this link:

<https://www.emptywheel.net/?s=jake+tapper>

And all the posts at this site tagged with "Dana Bash" here:

<https://www.emptywheel.net/?s=dana+bash>

Pardon me if I am incredibly skeptical about the ability of these two to catch a lie on the fly – especially at a news media outlet under pressure from management to be more Fox News-ish.

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This is an open thread. Bring discussion here which would be off topic in other threads.