

NYT “CENSORS” ELON MUSK’S JOKES ABOUT ASSASSINATING THE VICE PRESIDENT AND HIS “CENSORSHIP” OF JD VANCE DOSSIER

As journalists who focus on social media-enabled disinformation grow overwhelmed by the extent to which broad swathes of Americans have become detached from reality...

The truth is, it’s getting harder to describe the extent to which a meaningful percentage of Americans have dissociated from reality. As Hurricane Milton churned across the Gulf of Mexico last night, I saw an onslaught of outright conspiracy theorizing and utter nonsense racking up millions of views across the internet. The posts would be laughable if they weren’t taken by many people as gospel. Among them: Infowars’ Alex Jones, who claimed that Hurricanes Milton and Helene were “weather weapons” unleashed on the East Coast by the U.S. government, and “truth seeker” accounts on X that posted photos of condensation trails in the sky to baselessly allege that the government was “spraying Florida ahead of Hurricane Milton” in order to ensure maximum rainfall, “just like they did over Asheville!”

As Milton made landfall, causing a series of tornados, a verified account on X reposted a TikTok video of a massive funnel cloud with the caption “WHAT IS HAPPENING TO FLORIDA?!” The clip, which was eventually removed but had been viewed 662,000 times as of yesterday evening, turned out to be from

a video of a CGI tornado that was originally published months ago. Scrolling through these platforms, watching them fill with false information, harebrained theories, and doctored images—all while panicked residents boarded up their houses, struggled to evacuate, and prayed that their worldly possessions wouldn't be obliterated overnight—offered a portrait of American discourse almost too bleak to reckon with head-on.

... NYT decided to do a puff piece on Elon Musk's support for Trump.

Done as anything else than a corruption (which the piece largely ignores) or GOTV story, such a piece is in exceedingly bad taste.

All the more so given the way the NYT buries some of the most scandalous parts of the story.

In paragraph 23, for example, NYT cites two sources confirming that the Trump campaign intervened to get Xitter to take down links to the JD Vance dossier that Ken Klippenstein posted; it neither explains what was in the dossier nor names Klippenstein (indeed, aside from a photo caption, the article as a whole ignores JD Vance's role in the Musk-Trump bromance).

The relationship has proved significant in other ways. After a reporter's publication of hacked Trump campaign information last month, the campaign connected with X to prevent the circulation of links to the material on the platform, according to two people with knowledge of the events. X eventually blocked links to the material and suspended the reporter's account.

Donald Trump and top Republicans have spent *years* complaining that Twitter throttled,

for two days, a NY Post story on the hard drive of Hunter Biden's personal data that Trump's personal attorney was disseminating. Elon Musk allowed propagandists to sort through Xitter's internal discussions, and when Matty Taibbi misrepresented a reference to the takedown of dick pics, some of which Guo Wengui had altered, Musk outraged, "If this isn't a violation of the Constitution's First Amendment, what is?"



Congress has held hearings! Trump still whines about the throttling of the NY Post story in his campaign rallies. That's the excuse he uses for dodging the 60 Minutes interview.

This has been a central theme of right wing grievance for years. The Hunter Biden "laptop" is the founding myth in a far right reconceptualization of "free speech." And when NYT catches Trump and Musk doing what they complain about, NYT buried that in paragraph 23.

More dangerous still is the way NYT misrepresents Elon Musk's dangerous disinformation.

In the very last section of the 2,200 word story, starting around paragraph 33, NYT purports to describe Musk's "misinformation," suggesting he's dumb, not deliberate.

■ If America PAC is the most ambitious and

costly manifestation of Mr. Musk's support for Mr. Trump, nowhere has his cheerleading been more evident than on X.

Since publicly endorsing the former president in July, he has posted at least 109 times about Mr. Trump and the election. And while he has said in the past that the platform should be "politically neutral," he has used it to advance election misinformation and the baseless claim that Democrats are engaging in "deliberate voter importation" and "fast-tracking" immigrants to citizenship to gain control over the electorate.

One post with that claim this month has garnered nearly 34 million views, according to X's own metrics, underscoring the scale of attention that Mr. Musk, owner of the platform's most followed account, can command.

"Unless Trump wins and we get rid of the mountain of smothering regulations (that have nothing to do with safety!), humanity will never reach Mars," Mr. Musk wrote this month in a post that has gained nearly 18 million views. "This is existential."

Online, Mr. Musk has painted a dark picture of what would happen if Mr. Trump lost, a circumstance that could hurt Mr. Musk personally. In an interview with the former Fox News host Tucker Carlson, he acknowledged "trashing Kamala nonstop" and being all in for Mr. Trump.

If Mr. Trump loses, he joked, "how long do you think my prison sentence is going to be?"

This passage ignores Musk's most important disinformation – things like his

misrepresentation of hurricane response and his magnification of the most dehumanizing propaganda about migrants (including Haitians in Springfield, OH). NYT stupidly parroted Trump's claim that they would replace normal turnout by sowing disinformation about this stuff, yet now they soft pedal how Musk is doing things that might get people killed.

Crazier still, NYT chooses not to mention Musk's personal role in stoking far right anti-migrant violence in the UK, including his Tweet asserting that Civil War is inevitable. (NYT also doesn't mention Musk's attempt – with a legal fight all the way to the Supreme Court – to thwart Jack Smith's investigation into Trump and his intransigence in the face of Brazilian legal requests as part of its response to a coup attempt.)

Musk has become a transnational vector for far right political violence.

NYT doesn't mention that.

And finally, most insane of all, NYT doesn't mention that Elon Musk has, more than once, joked about assassination and Kamala Harris.



After the Secret Service reached out to him the first time, Musk repeated the claim in the last week, joking with Tucker Carlson.

NYT calls this – repeated “jokes” about assassinating Kamala Harris – “insult[ing the Democratic Party’s] candidate, Vice President

Kamala Harris.”

Elon Musk isn't helping Trump get elected, NYT's excuse for posting this puff piece. He's helping Trump stoke fascism.

And rather than explaining the risk, NYT simply buries it.