

Yes, There Was a 'Fake News' Problem During the Election

Since the conclusion of the presidential election campaign, I've been struck by the liberal mainstream media's crusade against "fake news" and conservatives' knee-jerk dismissive reaction.

There's more to it than I think anyone is actually willing to admit—on either side.

Thanks to a public education system that indoctrinated millions of children—who are now adults—that truth is relative and flexible, not an absolute, and that failed to teach them how to interrogate the information they receive, the liberal mainstream media had a monopoly.

Keep the American people ignorant, and they'll believe whatever they're told. And, for the better part of 40 years, that's exactly what they've done—tell you whatever comforting lies they can get away with—utterly failing to do their jobs, and forgetting their most important duty: to the truth.

But, over time—here and there—their facade began to crack.

Jayson Blair was merely a symptom. Then came Dan Rather and the Killian Documents. By the time Brian Williams was "conflating," all trust in the mainstream media was gone. But, incapable of interrogating information, many turned to sources that offered an "opposing viewpoint" without even considering whether or not the information was even accurate.

If Americans are anything, we're entrepreneurs by nature. The best ones are those who come up with a product others can't live without before they even know they need it. But in the case of "news," or better-stated, information, the Internet provides an overabundance that is oftentimes difficult to wade

through.

I, for one, lost count—far too early in the primary season—of the number of “fake news” articles that popped up on my Facebook news feed. Not “fake news” because I disagreed with it, but “fake news” because I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt it was false.

It started out as a slow trickle once or twice a week in mid-August of 2015, but by the time the first-in-the-nation Iowa caucuses arrived, it had become an hourly occurrence. And from there, it only got worse.

Websites popped up overnight, providing you with information. Was it true? Why was that important? It made you feel good, it reaffirmed your mistrust in the establishment, and when you shared it with your friends, you felt as though everyone’s eyes were being opened for the first time.

Think I’m crazy? Then how many of you actually believe Hillary Clinton only won 57 counties on Election Night?

Did any of you bother to look at the real results? Did any of you look at the red-and-blue map? The truth is you wanted to feel like Hillary Clinton’s loss was as humiliating as it was historic.

So, you shared it with your friends, who shared it with their friends, and so on, until millions of you saw and believed it.

The liberal mainstream media, however, isn’t talking about those articles because they’ve suddenly regained an interest in preserving the truth. No, like the typical liberals they are, they want to silence any dissenting opinions that might be prevalent in our society.

Oh, it will start with these fly-by-night websites that made stuff up in order to get you to click your way onto their pages, where they make money from the Google AdSense revenue.

But, really, they want to be able to slap the “fake news” label on anything that doesn’t agree with their own narrative.

And they want the government to help them do it.

During Monday’s White House press briefing, Press Secretary Josh Earnest was asked four times what President Obama is doing to prosecute purveyors of “fake news.” Even Earnest was taken aback by the questions, pointing the journalists back in the direction of the First Amendment to explain why the White House wasn’t doing anything at all.

But President-elect Trump has expressed an interest in being aggressive about policing falsehoods being put out by the media. Although it would be refreshing for the liberal mainstream media to drop its bias and begin reporting the unvarnished truth for a change, that’s not something the government should ever be involved with.

Government is inherently evil, albeit a necessary one in a civil society. Used properly, it can do great good. Wielded improperly, however, and it can do great harm.

Our Founding Fathers and the framers established the American form of self-governance based on checks and balances. At the center of that philosophy is the idea that the people have the power, that government functions only with the consent of the governed.

To quote comic book philosopher Stan Lee, “With great power comes great responsibility.”

It’s incumbent upon each of us to serve as a check against not only the three branches of government—executive, legislative, and judicial—but the “Fourth Estate” (the media) as well. We have to be the ones who fix the problem. {eoa}

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