



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on July 6, 2017

## Is CNN Digging Its Own Grave?

As if it weren't enough that a series of hidden-camera videos show that CNN deliberately creates fake news and has nothing but contempt for both President Trump and American voters, the liberal news network's reaction to a (probably) tasteless but (certainly) harmless video meme of Trump punching CNN in the face has caused the beleaguered network even more trouble.



The brouhaha began when President Trump took to Twitter Sunday to share a video meme. The video was an edited version of a clip from WrestleMania 23 in 2007 when Trump went up against WWE CEO Vince McMahon during a "Battle of the Billionaires" match in which Trump slammed McMahon to the floor and punched him in the face. A user on the social news aggregation site Reddit edited the video by superimposing the CNN logo over McMahon's face so the clip showed Trump "taking down fake news."

The meme had enjoyed moderate success until President Trump Tweeted it. Then it went viral. And the liberal mainstream media went ballistic. CNN released a statement saying, "It is a sad day when the President of the United States encourages violence against reporters." Other liberal media made similar statements. Of course Tweeting the video was not a very presidential thing to do, but to claim that Trump was encouraging violence is an excursion into the ridiculous.

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Trump's Tweeting of the meme came at a time when CNN is already taking a beating for creating fake news. A series of hidden-camera videos released by Project Veritas show CNN producers and commentators admitting that CNN's reports on alleged [connections and collusion between Trump and Russia are "bulls\\*\\*t,"](#) the whole [Russia thing "is just a big nothingburger,"](#) and that [CNN practices selective editing to promote a false narrative to American voters who are "stupid as s\\*\\*t."](#)

The backlash against CNN by viewers who came to realize the network would be better described as the Concocted News Network was immediate. Between May and June, CNN lost 20 percent of its viewership, dropping from 821,000 viewers per hour throughout the entire day and 1.12 million total viewers during the prime time hours to 666,000 viewers per hour throughout the day and 882,000 viewers during prime time.

Given the vote of "no confidence" from viewers, CNN's best course of action — perhaps the only course of action that might turn the tide — would have been a house-cleaning and an attempt to regain the trust of viewers. Instead, CNN doubled down and pressed on, defending the fake news it was caught producing. Then with the Trump wrestling Tweet, CNN jumped out of the frying pan and into the fire, by tracking down the redditor who created the meme and threatening to expose his identity unless he apologized and promised not to post similar things in the future.

The redditor — like many other users of the site — posted anonymously. His user name was "HanA\*\*holeSolo." Many of his posts contained images that were considered racist and anti-Semitic. CNN hunted him down and — after finding him — threatened to reveal his identity, even though doing



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so could expose him and his family to violence. “HanA\*\*holeSolo” posted a public apology on Reddit and closed his account. As CNN [reported](#):

Using identifying information that “HanA\*\*holeSolo” posted on Reddit, KFile was able to determine key biographical details, to find the man’s name using a Facebook search and ultimately corroborate details he had made available on Reddit.

And:

After posting his apology, “HanA\*\*holeSolo” called CNN’s KFile and confirmed his identity. In the interview, “HanA\*\*holeSolo” sounded nervous about his identity being revealed and asked to not be named out of fear for his personal safety and for the public embarrassment it would bring to him and his family.

The CNN report also said that the truth-battered network did not publish his name “because he is a private citizen who has issued an extensive statement of apology, showed his remorse by saying he has taken down all his offending posts, and because he said he is not going to repeat this ugly behavior on social media again. In addition, he said his statement could serve as an example to others not to do the same.”

Let that sink in. CNN — knowing that publishing the redditor’s name could cause both danger to him and embarrassment to his family — agreed not to do so, because he gave in under the threat of being revealed. And that is more than just an assumption or an inference: CNN came right out and said so. The very next line in the article — singled out in its own paragraph for emphasis — is, “CNN reserves the right to publish his identity should any of that change.”

But really, would anyone expect any more than that from a network that makes up fake news to boost ratings while undermining the legitimacy of the Trump presidency?

In using intimidation to force an apology and a promise of reform, CNN appears to have gone too far. Way too far. As in, in the legal sense.

As Julian Assange — the founder and editor-in-chief of WikiLeaks (which has also been unjustly maligned in CNN’s admitted “bulls\*\*t” narrative about a Trump/Russia connection) — [Tweeted](#), it is a federal crime under [18 U.S. Code Section 241](#) for two or more people to conspire to use intimidation to prevent someone from “the free exercise or enjoyment of any right or privilege secured to him by the Constitution or laws of the United States, or because of his having so exercised the same.”

And CNN is likely aware of the fact that publishing the threat on its website is akin to stepping in a pile of something that closely resembles its reporting. Wednesday morning, CNN’s Chris Cuomo Tweeted, “Should CNN reveal the name of Reddit user who made Trump wrestling video? Had a lot of bigoted and hateful material on page and website.” Minutes after posting the Tweet, Cuomo deleted it, but not before many people grabbed screenshots of it. Here is a clue for the folks over at CNN as they are clumsily flailing their way through all of this: The Internet never forgets.

Too bad CNN can’t simply delete the story that publicly threatened the redditor. Of course, if things keep going at this rate, and CNN continues to lose viewers, the whole website may go away soon enough. If there is anything someone wants from CNN’s website, they’d better grab it while they can.

Image of Donald Trump attacking CNN: Screenshot of a [YouTube video](#)



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