



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on August 13, 2019

NYT Weathering Storm for Headline that Appeared to be “Nice to Trump”

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Considering that the modus operandi of the liberal media includes an agenda to paint President Trump as a racist regardless of what he actually says or does, it is more than a little amusing to see them occasionally hoisted with their own petard. The recent experience of the *New York Times* offers a prime example.



First, the folks over at the newspaper of record have been experiencing an outright storm of controversy for — believe it or not — a “bad headline” that made it appear that the *Times* was being nice to President Trump. In what can only correctly be seen as evidence that the *Times* has created an environment for itself where journalistic objectivity is taboo and simply reporting the news without sufficient leftist spin is something approaching an unforgivable sin, the *Times* reported on the president’s weekend speech condemning the racism that served as part of the motivation for the mass shootings that left 31 dead in El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio. The problem? The front-page, above-the-fold headline (accurately) read, “TRUMP URGES UNITY VS. RACISM.”

Considering the backlash, one would have thought it read, “Trump Keeps Promises; Makes America Great Again” or “Times Endorses Trump for 2020.” Regular subscribers of “all the news that’s fit to spin” went apoplectic, slamming the *Times* via Twitter. One notable tweet-screed came from CNN contributor and columnist for the leftist *Nation* magazine, Joan Walsh, who tweeted, “I canceled my subscription. I know a lot of folks will tell me I’m wrong. I will miss it. But I can’t keep rewarding such awful news judgment.” She went on to compare the headline to the *Times*’ election-cycle-2016 decision to report on the FBI reopening the case on Hillary Clinton’s illegal use of a private, unsecured, unauthorized e-mail account and server. “‘Trump Urges Unity Against Racism’ is almost as bad as their full-page Comey letter coverage just before 2016 election. Nobody learns.”

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By the time the *Times*’ editorial bosses realized they had messed up by being accurate, they changed the headline. In fact, it was only the first edition that carried the “offending” headline. A spokesperson for the *Times* [told](#) the Daily Beast, “The original print headline was clearly flawed and was changed for all editions after the first.” The altered headline read, “ASSAILING HATE, BUT NOT GUNS.” Of course, that headline simply overflows with liberal pablum, while leaving the reader completely in the dark about the scope of the article. It clearly had only one objective: to communicate that the *Times* is still a liberal newspaper.

But the change was too late; the damage was already done. And, just to put in the for-what-it’s-worth



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column, the article that ran beneath the accidentally accurate headline was overflowing with typical leftist slams and accusations of Trump being at least partly responsible for the racism he condemns. In fact, Dean Baquet — who is the executive editor over at the *Times* — responded to the controversy of the headline by telling the Daily Beast, “I understand the concern people have. Headlines matter. But I hope they read the coverage, which I will argue was strong.”

But the content of the article — regardless of its liberal, anti-Trump slant — appears to be irrelevant to readers who have come to expect to be able to enjoy their morning coffee while perusing low-brow anti-Trumpisms in the form of easily-digested headlines. Pulitzer-Prize-winning syndicated columnist Connie Schultz (who is married to Senator Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) [tweeted](#): “The New York Times changed its headline for the second edition, but this [the original headline] is the one that landed on our doorstep & is displayed in storefronts throughout our majority-black zip code. What a betrayal, pretending this president is not the racist we know him to be.”

In an attempt to defend the *Times*, former Executive Editor Jill Abramson may have accidentally revealed that journalistic integrity and objectivity are deliberately avoided at the Gray Lady. “That’s part of this culture now — overreactions to everything,” she told the Daily Beast. “What provokes the ‘going nuts’ is understandable. But it’s an overreaction.” She went on to say, “What’s wrong is the people who see some conspiracy inside the Times to be nice to Trump. That’s absurd. Or ‘Let’s be really hard on Hillary.’” Because — as Abramson put it — “That just doesn’t happen. And when it happens, it’s a genuine mistake—and they fess up to it.”

One wonders if Abramson realizes what she just admitted

So, the folks over at the *Times* — having primed their regular readers to expect them to lead with (and stick to) virulent anti-Trump language, made a “genuine mistake” by inadvertently being “nice to Trump” in a headline. In an attempt to “fess up to it,” they changed the headline to something more palatable to their carefully groomed liberal readership. But — as it turns out — “readership” may not be the right word; The *Times* could likely stop writing articles altogether and simply run headlines without a large chunk of their subscribers ever realizing it.

Because, far from being a minor gaffe, the headline has created a storm the *Times* can’t seem to get in front of. In fact, on Monday, Baquet addressed the editorial staff in a hastily arranged, more-than-hour-long meeting on the topic. In that meeting, [he called the headline “a f***ing mess”](#) and told his staff they would have to do better in the future.

Of course, doing better likely means more headlines that cater to the anti-Trump appetites of subscribers, not an honest attempt at journalistic integrity and objectivity. Because even appearing to be “nice to Trump” or “hard on [someone like] Hillary” is a recipe for hemorrhaging subscribers. Headlines like that hurt the bottom line, and that appears to matter more than almost anything else.

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