



People Magazine Jumps on the Fake News Bandwagon

There are varying degrees of fake news, from spin to outright fabrication. What CNN has been doing for the past few months is an extreme — but far from singular — example of manufacturing “news” out of thin air. *People* magazine — known for celebrity gossip — is (not for the first time) wading in out of its depth in its upcoming print issue in an apparent attempt to capitalize on the anti-Trump fake news market.

The cover story of the *People* issue expected to hit newsstands and supermarket checkout lines (where it will appropriately be displayed alongside tabloids touting alien abductions and pregnant men) is entitled “Inside Trump Family’s Turmoil Amid Russia Scandal: Don Jr. Is ‘Miserable’ and Wants ‘These Four Years to Be Over’” and bears the caption “The Trump Family Secrets & Lies” on the cover of the magazine. Of course, that cover also advertises articles “Royal Tots on Tour” and “Blac Chyna Tells All: Life after the Kardashians and her nasty split from Rob.” It appears all three articles have about the same value (none) and about the same content (gossip).

An [abbreviated version of the Trump cover story](#) also appears on the magazine’s website and claims that Donald Trump, Jr. is “outshone by his sister,” “is miserable,” and “can’t wait for these four years to be over.” The article — based on (you guessed it) unnamed sources — serves as a jumping-off point for other liberal media to report on the “facts” (read: unsubstantiated rumors) it covers. According to the Wrap, the print version of the article “paints a picture of a family that is terrified of their powerful father.” The Wrap [goes on to say](#):

It reports that the president’s eldest son is having a “harder time adapting to life after the election” than his sister, Ivanka, because she has a role inside the White House and has “always been” Trump’s favorite child.

“He just goes to work every day and is miserable,” a source “in their inner circle” told *People*.

A “family friend” told *People* that Trump Jr. would never speak negatively about his father because “loyalty within this family is insane,” while another source told the magazine that the president’s son “can’t wait for these four years to be over.”

To put in the for-what-it’s-worth column, even if Trump, Jr. had said the things the article attributes to him (which, since the “sources” are unnamed, is less than certain), it would not necessarily mean that



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on July 20, 2017

the only interpretation is the one chosen by the gossip magazine. For instance, Trump, Jr. could reasonably be ready “for these four years to be over” because of hit pieces such as the *People* cover story masquerading as news articles. After all, who could blame him?

As for leveraging the supposed disagreements within the Trump family, it is important to remember that such gossip fodder — along with who gained weight, got divorced, or had an affair — is *People’s* bread and butter. In the same way that CNN continues to beat the drum of Trump/Russia collusion for the sake of ratings (even though a CNN producer admitted — on hidden camera — that [the narrative is “bulls*t”](#)), *People* is following its normal method of assuring wide circulation: spreading unsubstantiated rumors and exaggerating minor points as if they were real news. Old habits, it appears, are hard to break.



For example, the article — claiming that Trump, Jr. is miserable — offers this as evidence:

For all his campaign rallies last year and bellicose tweets this year, Trump Jr., who along with his brother Eric, 33, remained in N.Y.C. to run the family business, still relishes the quiet of his lifelong loves of hunting and fishing.

Most weekends, he escapes Trump Tower Manhattan to a rustic cabin upstate with his wife, Vanessa, and their five children. He’s a regular at the Riverside Café in Roscoe, New York, where the manager says Trump Jr. is “good people,” doesn’t seek attention, and “never has his hair slicked back like he does on TV.”

Since when did preferring hunting and fishing over the bright lights and noise of the Big Apple equate to misery? Perhaps *People* should paddle back over to the shallow end of the pool and not try so hard to pretend to be a news magazine. *People* is — after all — much better able to report on [George Clooney’s date night with his wife one month after the birth of their twins](#) or [\(supposedly\) hilarious texts between pop stars and their mothers](#).

The article also asserts that the scrutiny under which Trump, Jr. lives “includes potential legal jeopardy over his June 2016 meeting at Trump Tower with Russian lawyer Natalia Veselnitskaya and a Russian-American lobbyist who was once a Soviet military officer in a counterintelligence unit.” *People’s* gossip-mongering duly noted, legal experts have said that while Trump, Jr. may have acted foolishly (which he himself admitted to Fox News’ Sean Hannity), he did not likely break any laws. Furthermore, if Trump, Jr.’s meeting with Veselnitskaya broke the law, what about the [myriad Democrats who worked with — and for — Veselnitskaya for years](#)? *People*, like the other fake news liberal media, just ignores that information. That could be because it doesn’t fit the narrative they are pushing — [a narrative the meeting with Veselnitskaya actually disproves](#).

Here’s a piece of advice for the folks over at *People*: [Look to CNN](#) to see what happens [when you take the fake news thing too far](#). Play it safe and stick to “reporting” celebrity gossip.



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