dailywire.com

A website that often misstates facts to advance partisan opinion, and does not disclose its ownership by fracking industry billionaires who fund conservative candidates and causes.

Ownership and Financing

Dailywire.com is owned by Forward Publishing LLC, a company registered in Texas in 2015 by Robert Early, an executive at Wilks Brothers LLC, an investment management firm that also works in construction and real estate, according to LinkedIn.

Forward Publishing corporate records list the company's manager as Farris C. Wilks, a pastor and billionaire who, along with his brother Dan, made a fortune in the fracking industry in the 2000s. Forward Publishing LLC is based in Cisco, Texas, the Wilks' hometown.

The Wilks brothers have donated millions of dollars to conservative causes, including $15 million to a Super PAC backing Republican U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz, during his 2016 campaign for the presidency. Farris Wilks donated $100,000 to the Texans Are PAC that supported Ted Cruz's 2018 U.S. Senate campaign against then-U.S. Rep. Beto O'Rourke.

Foundations controlled by the brothers have made past donations including $1.5 million to Liberty Counsel, a nonprofit that aided Kentucky court clerk Kim Davis when she refused to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples; and $1.35 million to the conservative PAC Empower Texans, according to reports in Reuters and the Dallas Morning News. Farris Wilks has also donated more than $900,000 to the American Family Association, a nonprofit that opposes abortion, same-sex marriage, and pornography, according to Reuters.

Daily Wire founder and editor-in-chief Ben Shapiro is a conservative commentator and podcaster, with a following of over 5 million on Facebook, more than twice the Facebook followers for the Daily Wire. His podcast, The Ben Shapiro Show, is one of the most popular in the U.S.

Dailywire.com generates revenue from advertisements and subscriptions. A premium subscription offers an ad-free version of the site, as well as access to the site's podcasts, including the Ben Shapiro Show. The site also invites users to book Shapiro and other Daily Wire writers for public speaking engagements, and sells tickets to live recordings of the Ben Shapiro Show.

Content

The Daily Wire publishes news and opinion on American politics and culture, including the Trump administration, immigration, the environment, abortion, and LGBTQ issues.

Content is divided into two sections: News, and Shows, which feature video podcasts for paying subscribers. The site also hosts discussion forums in a Discussions section.

The Daily Wire typically injects a conservative spin on the news of the day. Opinion articles, frequently written by Shapiro, often appear as lead stories on the homepage. Frequent coverage topics include Immigration, abortion, feuds between Democrats and the Trump administration, and news coverage by what the site often calls "leftist media."

Stories sometimes embed videos from Daily Wire commentators or include trending social media posts. Video podcasts from commentators such as Shapiro, Andrew Klavan, and Michael Knowles appear in a "Shows" and a "Latest" section.

Typical headlines include "Trump Supporters Clean Up West Baltimore and the Liberal Media Are Irritated," "BACKLASH: Boycott Gains Steam After Nike Drops American Flag Shoe At Colin Kaepernick's Behest," and "Trump Slams Obama: I'm Supposed To Be President Of The USA, Not
President Of The World," and "The Left-Wing Media STILL Running Awful Takes on the Covington Catholic story."

The site also occasionally publishes satirical articles, which are labeled in the headline, such as "Democrat Fired After Tweets Surface Saying 'It's A Free Country' [Satire]" and "Democrats Offer Voters An Alternative To Peace and Prosperity [Satire]."

Credibility

The Daily Wire's news stories regularly rely on accounts by other news organizations, which range from outlets such as ABC News and Bloomberg News to Breitbart and the anti-abortion site LifeSiteNews. The website also relies on widely shared videos, social media posts, and government documents. It occasionally conducts original interviews.

However, the Daily Wire frequently publishes false and misleading information, particularly in stories about abortion. For example, the website published several articles and headlines in 2019 that mischaracterized a change to New York's abortion law. A June 2019 article said that the law "allows abortion until the moment of birth for essentially any reason." A January 2019 article, "New York's New Abortion Law Even Removes Protections For WANTED Babies"), said that the bill "legalizes abortion from week one of a pregnancy through birth for all women in New York state, for nearly any excuse."

The new law broadened the exceptions for when abortions can be performed past the 24th week of pregnancy to when "there is an absence of fetal viability, or the abortion is necessary to protect the patient's life or health," not "for essentially any reason" or "nearly any excuse," as the Daily Wire articles claimed. Under the old law, abortions were only allowed past 24 weeks when the mother's life was in danger.

A September 2019 article made false claims about the medical necessity for abortions. The article said, "As former abortionist Dr. Anthony Levatino said during an interview with Lila Rose, founder of anti-abortion organization Live Action, late-term abortions are never medically necessary to save the life of the mother."

According to a February 2019 document published by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), titled "Facts are Important: Abortion Care Later in Pregnancy is Important to Women's Health," there are a number of situations when an abortion later in pregnancy could be necessary to save the mother's life. The document says, "Abortion later in pregnancy may also be necessary when complications severely compromise a woman's health or life, conditions which may also reduce the possibility of fetal survival. These might include premature rupture of membranes and infection, preeclampsia, placental abruption, and placenta accreta. Women in these circumstances may risk extensive blood loss, stroke, and septic shock that could lead to maternal death."

A January 2019 opinion article titled "WALSH: Abortion Advocates Keep Telling This Huge Lie About Late-Term Abortion. Don't Fall For It," went further when columnist Matt Walsh stated that "this is the crucial fact, abortion is never necessary to protect the life of the mother. In the whole history of human civilization there has never been one case where a baby had to be directly killed in order to save a woman's life."

ACOG, as well as a nonprofit called Physicians for Reproductive Health, contradicted those claims in a September 2019 statement titled "Abortion Can Be Medically Necessary," writing

"There are situations where pregnancy termination in the form of an abortion is the only medical intervention that can preserve a patient's health or save their life," an August 2019 article from fact-checking site HealthFeedback.org said, "there are many medical conditions, such as pre-eclampsia, HELLP syndrome and placenta previa, in which abortion could become medically necessary in order to save the life of the mother."

The Daily Wire misrepresented U.S. Food and Drug Administration data to advance false claims about deaths associated with the use of Mifepr, the brand name of mifepristone, which can be taken in conjunction with another drug to terminate pregnancies. A July 2018 story, "REPORT: Abortion Pill Kills 22 Women, Injures Thousands," stated, "According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), at least 22 women have been killed by abortion pills, and thousands more have been injured."

The agency did not make such a statement. Instead, the FDA attributed
eight of the 22 deaths in infection, or sepsis, and said that six of the deaths occurred as the result of drug overdoses, two cases were caused by suicide and a suspected homicide, and others were attributed to ailments including emphysema and toxic shock syndrome. In addition, the FDA’s guidance on all adverse events associated with the drug through 2017, including 2,740 “cases with any adverse event,” included a disclaimer note saying, “These events cannot with certainty be causally attributed to mifepristone because of information gaps about patient health status, clinical management of the patient, concurrent drug use, and other possible medical or surgical treatments and conditions.”

The website also distorted FDA data in a September 2019 article titled “Transgender Puberty Blocking Drug Linked to Thousands of Deaths, FDA Data Reveals.” The article claimed that “more than 6,300 adults have died from reactions to a drug that is used as a puberty blocker in gender-confused children, Food & Drug Administration data shows.”

The FDA data did not say, as the Daily Wire article claimed, that Lupron caused more than 6,300 deaths. While 6,370 deaths following the use of the drug have been reported to the FDA Adverse Event Reporting System (FAERS), a disclaimer on the FDA website stated these reports have not been verified and do not establish that the drug caused or contributed to the reported reaction (including deaths).

The Daily Wire has also misstated facts related to the impeachment inquiry of U.S. President Donald Trump, advancing false information about a whistleblower, whose claim about President Trump’s telephone call to the president of Ukraine prompted the impeachment proceedings.

In two September 2019 articles, including a story headlined “Intel Community ‘Secretly Eliminated’ Requirement of First-Hand Whistleblower, Report Says,” the website cited a “bombshell report” from The Federalist that falsely claimed that the Intelligence community had eliminated a requirement that whistleblowers provide direct, firsthand knowledge of alleged wrongdoing.

The Office of the Inspector General of the Intelligence Community (ICIG) issued a statement on Sept. 30, 2019, rebutting The Federalist’s claims, saying while its whistleblower form “requests information about whether the complainant possesses first-hand knowledge about the matter about which he or she is lodging the complaint, there is no such requirement set forth in the statute.”

In a September 2019 opinion column, “HAMMER: The ‘Deep State’ is Very, Very Real,” the Daily Wire falsely said that the whistleblower’s complaint “of course, is also entirely reliant on second-hand information — not even all of which has proven accurate.” However, in its September 30, 2019, statement, the ICIG also said that the whistleblower who filed the “urgent concern” complaint about President Trump in August 2019 “stated on the form that he or she possessed both first-hand and other information.” Neither article was corrected or updated after the ICIG released its statement.

The Daily Wire has also published false claims about climate change. An October 2019 article headlined “KNOWLES: AOC Travels To Europe To Cry,” for example, stated, “The worst global warming predictions are that the Earth will warm about two degrees over a century. There is no evidence that this will pose any problems for humans, certainly will not pose any problems for Americans.”

A report released in October 2018 by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change of the United Nations listed many ramifications of a global temperature increase of 2 degrees Celsius. The report stated, “Climate-related risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security, and economic growth are projected to increase with global warming of 1.5°C and increase further with 2°C.” The panel’s report listed risks including the exposure of 37 percent of Earth’s population to “severe heatwaves” at least once every five years; “thousands of billions of USD annually” in damages from coastal flooding, which could affect at least 136 port cities with populations greater than 1 million; and “reductions in projected food availability.”

In addition to false information in the headlines listed above, the Daily Wire has published other deceptive headlines. For example, the claims in a December 2019 headline, “STUDY: Oral Contraceptives Linked To Shrinking Brain Sizes,” were refuted by the study’s author.

Dr. Michael Lipton, director of radiology research at the Albert Einstein
College of Medicine in New York City, told Vice News that his study had not made the conclusion that the Daily Wire claimed. The study actually found an association between using birth control pills and a smaller hypothalamus, a small part of the brain that helps regulate hormones, among other functions.

“We haven’t demonstrated that this is clearly a causal relationship, and to do so would require a very different study,” Lipton told Vice News. “It’s a leap to say birth control ‘shrinks’ your brain.”

A September 2019 article headlined “Church Of Sweden Announced Greta Thunberg ‘Successor’ Of Jesus.” reported that a local Swedish church tweeted that Thunberg was a “successor” of Jesus Christ in December 2018. The article never said that the national Church of Sweden made such a pronouncement. “No — Church of Sweden has (obviously) not proclaimed Greta Thunberg as successor of Jesus Christ,” Church of Sweden spokesperson Martin Larsson told The Associated Press in October 2019.

A November 2018 headline, “REPORT: One-Third Of Migrant Caravan Sick: HIV, Tuberculosis, Chickenpox,” exaggerated how many people in a group of Central American migrants in Tijuana, Mexico had been diagnosed with those three diseases. According to a Tijuana Health Department official cited by Fox News, there were “three confirmed cases of tuberculosis, four cases of HIV/AIDS and four separate cases of chickenpox” among the 6,000 migrants in Tijuana. The “one-third” figure cited in the headline was based on 2,267 migrants that Fox reported were being treated for any health-related issue.

DailyWire.com has regularly published favorable coverage of Texas U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz, the senator who received $15 million in financing from the website’s owners in 2016. A NewsGuard review of 30 DailyWire.com stories featuring Cruz in the fall of 2019 found that all of them portrayed the senator in a highly positive light. Typical stories included “WATCH: Cruz Blasts Obama Administration For Ignorance Of FBI Targeting Trump: ‘This Wasn’t Jason Bourne. This Was Beavis and Butt-Head’” (December 2019), “Cruz Shreds Far-Left Journalists, Publications On Ukraine Meddling In 2016 Election,” (December 2019), and “Bernie Pushes Population Control In Poor Countries To Save Planet; Cruz Smacks Him” (September 2019). A June 2019 news story titled “Ted Cruz Proposes Important Amendment To Finally End Iran’s Civil-Nuclear Waivers” began by calling Cruz “arguably the single most authentically pro-Israel elected politician in America,” praised his proposal as “common sense policy, pure and simple,” and added, “Conservative Iran hawks ought to be thankful, yet again, for Cruz’s leadership on the issue of preventing a nuclear Iran.”

The Daily Wire’s positive coverage of Cruz is disproportionate to how it handles national leaders in the Republican Party. For a comparison, NewsGuard reviewed 30 DailyWire.com stories featuring Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and found they generally portrayed him in a more neutral tone, with typical headlines such as “WATCH: McConnell Believes It Is ‘Inconceivable’ That Trump Will Be Removed From Office” (November 2019), “McConnell: Yes, We’d Have To Take Up Impeachment” (October 2019), and “McConnell Nudging Trump Administration Official Toward Senate Run” (August 2019). Occasionally, articles and headlines have portrayed McConnell negatively, such as September 2019’s “Progressive Super PAC Trolls McConnell With ‘Moscow Mitch’ Browser Extension.”

Because the Daily Wire has regularly misstated and distorted facts in stories and headlines to advance its views and politicians financed by the website’s owners, NewsGuard has determined that Daily Wire does not gather and present information responsibly and fails to avoid deceptive headlines.

The Daily Wire has published corrections, which typically appear as notes above or below the article. However, the website has not corrected, updated, or removed many stories that advocate false claims, including those cited above, which is why NewsGuard has determined that it does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for regularly issuing corrections.

The Daily Wire discloses its political perspective both on the Subscribe page, which calls it “the largest conservative news site in America,” and the Book Our Speakers page, which describes the site as “a hard-hitting, irreverent news and commentary site for a new generation of conservatives.”

However, the website regularly inserts opinionated language and
headlines into stories labeled as news, which does not meet NewsGuard's standard for handling the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

In a typical example, a September 2019 news article titled "Hollywood Celebrities Celebrate Pelosi Announcing Dems Will Seek Trump's Impeachment" began: "Hollywood celebrities, looking like the Three Stooges climbing desperately over each other to be the first to clamber atop the impeachment bandwagon, chortled with glee on Tuesday after Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi announced she would spearhead a formal impeachment inquiry in the House."

Another September 2019 news article, headlined "Democrats Pounce On Odessa Shooting To Boost Their Political Campaigns," criticized Democratic presidential candidate for supporting gun control proposals after a shooting in Odessa, Texas: "The candidates, most of whom support abortion up until the moment of birth, immediately seized on the tragedy and looked to score political points." The article went on to describe Beto O'Rourke as "desperately seeking attention." Headlines are regularly opinionated, such as the September 2019 articles "AOC Floats New Poverty Line, And It's Full-On Insane," "Dishonest Media Leave Out What Trump's Favor From Ukraine President Actually Was," and "Conservative Activists Clean Up 50 TONS Of Garbage In Liberal Los Angeles; Media Silent."

The Daily Wire and Shapiro have not responded to five NewsGuard emails, including two inquiries sent in 2019, seeking comment about its editorial practices, false and misleading stories and headlines, its favorable coverage of Ted Cruz, and its unlabeled opinion in news stories.

**Transparency**

The Daily Wire does not clearly disclose its relationship to Forward Publishing, only mentioning the company in its Privacy Policy and Terms of Use sections, which does not meet NewsGuard's standards for disclosing ownership in a user-friendly manner.

The site does not disclose that the Wilks brothers own Forward Publishing, or disclose the Wilks' brothers financing of other conservative candidates and causes through foundations and PACs. No stories about issues or candidates that the Wilks brothers support, such as its disproportionately favorable coverage of U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz, contain any disclosure about the owners.

Shapiro is identified as the site's editor-in-chief only on the Book Our Speakers page and in a biography that appears on stories that carry his byline. Because the Book Our Speakers page is not a place where a user would expect to find information about editorial leadership, NewsGuard has determined that the website does not meet its standard for revealing who is in charge in a user-friendly manner.

The Contact Us page provides a general web form for questions.

The Daily Wire and Shapiro did not respond to five NewsGuard emails, including two inquiries in 2019, seeking comment about the website's failure to disclose ownership and failure to clearly reveal who is in charge.

Articles are generally credited to their authors, although summaries of the Daily Wire's podcasts are often credited to "Daily Wire Staff." Articles written by columnists generally include their biographies. A NewsGuard review found that biographies were also provided for at least half of the site's news writers, which is why NewsGuard has determined that the site meets NewsGuard's standard for providing information about content creators. Individual contact information for authors is generally not provided.

Advertisements are distinguished from editorial content.

**History**


Shapiro resigned from Breitbart in 2016 along with reporter Michelle Fields, who said that she had been roughed up by Trump's then-campaign manager, Corey Lewandowski, at a campaign event. Breitbart initially reported the incident in a way that cast doubt on Fields' account.
Editor's Note: Following a new review of content on DailyWire.com, NewsGuard updated this Nutrition Label on December 17, 2019, to reflect its determination that, contrary to an earlier version of this label, DailyWire.com fails to meet NewsGuard's standard for gathering and presenting information responsibly, for avoiding deceptive headlines, and for clearly revealing who is in charge.

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Send feedback to NewsGuard: Click Here

Sources

Ownership and Financing
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FDA disclaimer on adverse events:

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Abortion is not medically necessary #1:

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News/opinion example #1:

News/opinion example #2:


News/opinion example #5: https://www.dailywire.com/news/dishonest-media-leaving-out-what-trumps-favor-from-ukraine-president-actually-was

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