

# theamericanmirror.com

An anonymously run conservative news site that misstates and distorts facts, including about the COVID-19 pandemic.



Proceed with caution: This website severely violates basic standards of credibility and transparency.

## Ownership and Financing

The site is owned by a company called Five Points Consulting, LLC. According to the database OpenCorporates, Five Points Consulting — which lacks a website or any other identifying information online — is registered in Michigan to Kyle Olson, a conservative commentator who writes for Breitbart.com and founded the Education Action Group Foundation, a Michigan organization that has promoted public school alternatives. Olson’s Facebook page says that he is the founder of TheAmericanMirror.com.

The site generates revenue from advertising.

## Content

TheAmericanMirror.com mainly covers U.S. politics from a conservative, pro-Donald Trump perspective. The website routinely criticizes the Democratic Party and Americans who do not support President Trump. The site also covers celebrities who oppose President Trump, and issues such as gun rights and gender identity.

Typical headlines have included “Chrissy Teigen calls First Lady Melania Trump a ‘wifebot’ in profanity-laced rant,” “BIDEN CONFUSION: Went to South Africa with members of ‘CDC’ — the ‘Congressional Black Caucus,’” and “VIDEO: Bandaged, raspy Pelosi suffers face spasms, mar words during brief impeachment announcement.”

The website previously published originally reported stories in a section titled “Exclusive,” but that section has not featured any new posts since July 2018. Most content on the site is republished from conservative news sites such as WayneDupree.com, Objectivist.co, and LifeZette.com.

Score: 22/100

- ✓ Does not repeatedly publish false content (22points)
- ✗ Gathers and presents information responsibly (18)
- ✗ Regularly corrects or clarifies errors (12.5)
- ✗ Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly (12.5)
- ✗ Avoids deceptive headlines (10)
- ✗ Website discloses ownership and financing (7.5)
- ✗ Clearly labels advertising (7.5)
- ✗ Reveals who’s in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest (5)
- ✗ The site provides names of content creators, along with either contact or biographical information (5)

Criteria are listed in order of importance.

[More information.](#)

The American Mirror has misstated and distorted facts to advance a conservative perspective, including unsubstantiated claims related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

For example, an April 2020 article, “DOC: Hospitals getting paid more to label cause of death as ‘coronavirus,’” republished from WayneDupree.com, claimed that doctors have intentionally inflated the COVID-19 death toll. The article cited a Fox News interview with Scott Jensen, a Minnesota state senator and physician, who “says the American Medical Association is now ‘encouraging’ doctors to overcount coronavirus deaths across the country,” according to The American Mirror article.

The article cited Jensen’s description of a document that he said would let doctors attribute deaths to the COVID-19 virus on death certificates without a formal lab diagnosis, and quoted him as saying that hospitals are paid more for treating COVID-19 patients. The American Mirror article added, “We can’t just sit back and assume nobody would take advantage of that. Like the doctor says, we can’t be that naive to think people are not altering the way they do business and possibly ‘fudging’ the numbers to get more federal funds.”

While it is true that the federal government has paid hospitals more for treating COVID-19 patients, under a provision in the 2020 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, there is no evidence that the American Medical Association is “‘encouraging’ doctors to overcount coronavirus deaths across the country,” as The American Mirror claimed.

Doctors who have attributed patient deaths to the COVID-19 virus, even without lab test results, are also following the guidance of U.S. health authorities. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said on its website in April 2020 that officials should report COVID-19 deaths “if the circumstances are compelling within a reasonable degree of certainty,” even in the absence of a positive test result, according to an April 2020 article by FactCheck.org.

There is also no evidence that the count of coronavirus deaths in the U.S. is overstated. In an April 2020 PolitiFact article, Jennifer Kates, the Kaiser Family Foundation's director of global health & HIV policy, said that because testing was not available for everyone who reported symptoms in the early stages of the pandemic, "the data has suggested that, in fact, there's a significant undercount of deaths to COVID."

A March 2020 article, also republished from WayneDupree.com, falsely claimed that the COVID-19 virus originated in a Chinese lab, and also claimed that the virus was identified by University of North Carolina researchers in 2016.

"If you believe that this virus came from bats, you are batty," the article said. "It came from a lab in China. The doctor working on the virus was working on the same virus at a University in North Carolina in 2016. He went back to China to continue working on it."

The American Mirror's article said that the North Carolina researcher, who was not named, "was the one who sounded the alarm on the virus, and he is dead from the virus. Keep thinking it came from bats, and I have a bridge to sell you."

In February 2020, the World Health Organization said in a situation report on the COVID-19 virus, "increasing evidences demonstrate the link between the 2019-nCoV and other similar known coronaviruses (CoV) circulating in bats." A March 2020 study published in the journal Nature Medicine concluded that the virus "is not a laboratory construct or a purposefully manipulated virus." An earlier study, published in February 2020 in the journal Nature, found that the COVID-19 virus is "96% percent identical at the whole-genome level to a bat coronavirus."

It is not clear to whom the article refers when it mentions a doctor from the University of North Carolina who died. While a University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill study published in 2015 did conclude that viruses similar to another strain of coronavirus, the

SARS coronavirus, were capable of directly infecting humans, the study did not involve the COVID-19 virus that caused the 2020 pandemic.

Another March 2020 article reposted from WayneDupree.com, titled “LA TIMES: Barack Obama’s Fault There’s a Shortage of N95 Respirator Masks,” misrepresented a Los Angeles Times article’s reporting, while falsely claiming that former U.S. President Barack Obama was responsible for the lack of available personal protective equipment in the U.S. during the coronavirus pandemic. “The Dems have been screaming and yelling about masks, and blaming President Trump for the shortage. But there’s one big problem with that... The reason we’re short is not thanks to Trump, it’s thanks to Obama,” the American Mirror article said.

The Los Angeles Times article did report that the Obama administration had not replenished its supply of N95 respirator masks during the swine flu epidemic in 2009. However, the article did not say that Obama was responsible for the shortage of protective equipment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, in 2018 and 2019 Worldwide Threat Assessments, issued by the U.S. intelligence community during Trump’s presidency, “government agencies and public health institutions continued to warn of the need for more medical supplies,” the Los Angeles Times said.

TheAmericanMirror.com has also misstated facts in headlines, such as those cited above, and in an April 2020 article headlined “California to give masks out to illegals before citizens.” The article, which was republished from LifeZette.com, did not say that California was going to distribute protective masks to undocumented immigrants at any time. Rather, the article said that California Gov. Gavin Newsom planned to distribute state funds to undocumented immigrants, since they were not eligible for federal stimulus checks as a result of the pandemic.

Because TheAmericanMirror.com regularly misstates and distorts facts in articles and headlines to advance conservative views, NewsGuard has determined that the website does not gather and present information responsibly and does not avoid deceptive headlines.

TheAmericanMirror.com does not disclose an overall political orientation, and does not label any of its content opinion. However, it regularly includes conservative opinion in stories that report news, which is why NewsGuard has determined that it does not handle the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

For example, a March 2020 news article titled “MSNBC conspiracy theorist Rachel Maddow wrong — again” referred to CNN as “notorious fake news pushers.” A March 2020 news article titled “President Trump, DOJ side with female athletes against male ‘transgender’ scammers” mocked transgender people and progressives, writing that “men pretending to be women, while never that amusing as entertainment outside of Oxbridge revues or POW camps, who use gender chicanery to falsely win athletic prizes has got to be a new low for the Left.”

TheAmericanMirror.com does not post a corrections policy, and NewsGuard could not find any corrections on the site.

Two NewsGuard emails sent in April 2020 to a general email address, seeking comment on the website’s editorial practices, mixing of news and opinion, and lack of corrections, were undeliverable. The site also did respond to an additional 2020 inquiry through a contact form on the site, and did not respond to two emails sent in 2018.

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Transparency

TheAmericanMirror.com only discloses its ownership by Five Points Consulting, LLC, in a small notice in its privacy policy, which does not meet NewsGuard’s

standard for clearly disclosing ownership and financing. The website also does not disclose its connection to founder Kyle Olson.

The site does not provide information about its leadership or editorial staff. Most articles are attributed only to The American Mirror or to the website where they were originally published, with no byline. Articles that do have bylines do not provide biographies or contact information for the writers.

Some display advertisements are distinguished from editorial content. However, the website publishes videos and other sponsored content within articles, labeling it only as “promoted content.”

In a section of the site called “Resources,” The American Mirror publishes articles that provide financial and health advice. Topics include Drug Addiction Hotline, Bitcoin Revolution Review, Payday Loan Apps, Alcohol Rehab, and Trading Tips. Some sections, such as a topic titled Best Keto Pills, promote specific products in articles, although the content is not labeled as advertising or sponsored content.

Because The American Mirror publishes sponsored content that is labeled only as promoted, and because it publishes articles that advertise services or products without disclosing a commercial relationship with the businesses, NewsGuard has determined that the website does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for clearly labeling advertising.

Two NewsGuard emails sent in April 2020 to a general email address, seeking comment on the website’s lack of disclosure for its owners, editors, and content creators, as well as its unlabeled sponsored content, were undeliverable. The site also did respond to an additional 2020 inquiry through a contact form on the site, and did not respond to two emails sent in 2018.

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## History

The American Mirror was founded by Olson, a conservative commentator who co-authored the 2014 book, “Conform: Exposing the Truth About Common

Core and Public Education,” with conservative radio personality Glenn Beck.

Olson now writes for Breitbart and runs a website called EAGNews.org, affiliated with a nonprofit he leads that advocates for school choice. The American Mirror’s website was registered in December 2014.

During Hillary Clinton’s 2016 presidential campaign, TheAmericanMirror.com opened a “Hillary for Prison” Fund, which claimed to channel “every penny” towards “searching and reporting on Hillary, Bill and their cronies employing Saul Alinsky tactics to seize power.” According to the site, donations were not tax deductible. The donations page was not active on the site in mid-2020.

*Editor’s Note: This Nutrition Label was updated on May 26, 2020, with a review of newer content on the site.*

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**Edited by:** [Josh Keefe](#), [Amy Westfeldt](#)

**Send feedback to NewsGuard:** [Click Here](#)

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Transparency

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History

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