

breitbart.com

A conservative news and commentary site that advocates for U.S. President Donald Trump's nationalist and populist policies. The site has published false and misleading claims, including about COVID-19.



Proceed with caution: This website fails to adhere to several basic journalistic standards.

Score: 42/100

Ownership and Financing

Breitbart.com is owned by Breitbart News Network, a Limited Liability Corporation registered in Delaware. In February 2017, Breitbart CEO Larry Solov said he was one of the company's owners, along with Susie Breitbart, widow of founder Andrew Breitbart. The family of billionaire investor and Republican donor Robert Mercer bought nearly 50 percent of the company for \$10 million in 2011, according to a January 2017 report in The Wall Street Journal. Mercer co-founded and invested \$15 million in Cambridge Analytica, a data consulting firm that came under fire from both U.S. and British legislators for harvesting data from up to 87 million Facebook accounts without permission.

In November 2017, Mercer announced he was selling his stake in Breitbart to his daughters. Mercer and daughter Rebekah provided financial backing to Donald Trump's presidential campaign, and helped install former Breitbart chairman Steve Bannon as the campaign's CEO in August 2016. Bannon served as a top White House advisor for the first seven months of the Trump administration.

Rebekah Mercer led Make America Number 1, a super PAC that backed Trump in 2016, and leads the Mercer Family Foundation, which has contributed to conservative causes and think tanks.

Some advertisers have left the site since November 2016, due to a campaign organized by a group of liberal online activists who call themselves "The Sleeping Giants." In March 2018, a spokesperson for the group claimed that nearly 4,000 advertisers had stopped advertising on Breitbart since the campaign began.



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.](#)

Asked about the Sleeping Giants' boycott, Larry Solov, CEO of Breitbart, told NewsGuard in an email: "Any impact on our revenue as a result of Sleeping Giants' defamatory and deceitful campaign against Breitbart (which we note is also now being aimed at Fox News and The Daily Caller, among other conservative leaning news companies) has zero bearing on the question of the trustworthiness of our website."

Content

Breitbart covers the news of the day, including international, political, business, and entertainment news. It covers U.S. politics from a conservative populist perspective, which translates to avid support of U.S. President Donald Trump and his "America First" policies, as well as for nationalist movements in Europe.

The site provides extensive coverage of news related to immigration in the United States and Europe, often linking immigration to crime and violence. For example, the site's Border/Cartel Chronicles section reports almost exclusively on crimes allegedly committed by Mexicans on both sides of the U.S. border, or by members of Mexican drug cartels.

The top of the homepage displays links to categories of stories including Politics, Media, Economy, and World. The site also offers pages on Tech, Video, Sports, as well as a section of stories from wire services, including The Associated Press and Agence France-Press. Breitbart is based in Los Angeles and has bureaus in Washington, London, Rome, and Jerusalem. The site maintains dedicated pages focused on London, Israel, Africa, and Asia.

In 2016, Bannon, then the site's chairman — he stepped down in January 2018 — described the site as "the platform for the alt-right," referring to a group of insurgent conservatives that the conservative National Review later described as a "motley crew of white nationalists, neo-Confederates, and outright Nazis."

Breitbart.com has pushed back against Bannon's characterization of the site's relationship with the alt-right. In an August 2017 story that touted a Harvard

professor's conclusion that "Breitbart is not the alt-right," Breitbart reporter Tony Lee said that Bannon "apparently thought" the alt-right "consisted mainly of computer gamers and blue-collar voters" who were fed up with former U.S. President George W. Bush's milder brand of conservatism.

Breitbart.com does not disclose a political orientation on the site. Asked about this, Solov told NewsGuard in an email, "Breitbart News does not have a political orientation, so we do not even understand or accept the premise of the question." Asked in a subsequent phone interview to elaborate, Solov said, "Political orientation sounds like, first of all it sounds monolithic. Second, it sounds like Republican, Democrat, you know, Green Party. There's no way to answer that. We're not a monolithic site. Our content speaks for itself."

The site's stories about LGBTQ issues frequently take on a highly negative tone about gay and transgender rights and efforts to expand protections to those communities, with articles grouped in topics such as "radical LGBT agenda."

For example, in December 2019, Breitbart published a story headlined "Medical Societies Provide Cover for Transgender Industry's Propaganda" that stated that the advocacy group Human Rights Campaign was engaged in "bullying and coercive attacks in order to force acceptance of the LGBTQ lifestyle." Similarly, an April 2019 story about a United Nations-sponsored sex education program that included awareness of LGBTQ issues was described by Breitbart as "promoting transgender ideology and homosexual lifestyles."

Credibility

In a previous review of the site, NewsGuard found that the site's editorial standards seemed to have improved and that the site had become less inflammatory. However, in August 2020, NewsGuard's review found that Breitbart.com was repeatedly misstating facts in articles pushing the Trump administration's agenda, including in stories about the COVID-19 pandemic.

For example, Breitbart published several stories about a July 27 and 28, 2020, event in Washington, D.C., called the “White Coat Summit,” that was organized by the conservative group Tea Party Patriots. In front of the U.S. Supreme Court, people dressed in lab coats who identified themselves as a group called America’s Frontline Doctors promoted claims that the anti-malaria drug hydroxychloroquine could “cure” the COVID-19 virus.

In a July 27, 2020, article that included video of the group’s press conference from that day, Dr. Stella Immanuel claimed that hydroxychloroquine was a cure for COVID-19 and asserted that she has successfully treated 350 COVID-19 patients with the drug at her own Texas clinic. “This virus has a cure, it’s called hydroxychloroquine, zinc, and Zithromax,” Immanuel said. “You don’t need masks, there is a cure.”

Contrary to Immanuel’s claim, multiple randomized clinical trials have found that hydroxychloroquine does not provide beneficial effects to COVID-19 patients. In June 2020, U.K. researchers ended the use of hydroxychloroquine in a trial involving 4,600 patients treated with the drug. “We have concluded that there is no beneficial effect of hydroxychloroquine in patients hospitalised with COVID-19,” according to a statement by researchers Martin Landray and Peter Horby of the RECOVERY (Randomised Evaluation of COVID-19 Therapy) trial. Another trial involving 400 patients, conducted at the University of Minnesota and published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, found that for patients who did not require hospitalization, hydroxychloroquine had the same impact on the severity of COVID-19 symptoms as a placebo.

Later in the video, Dr. Richard Urso, an eye doctor in Houston, asserted that the drug had a prophylactic effect, meaning that a person taking it will be protected from being infected with the COVID-19 virus in the lungs. “As soon as the virus gets there, it’s going to have a hard time getting through because the hydroxychloroquine blocks it from getting in,” Urso said.

Urso's claim was contradicted by an earlier clinical trial published in the New England Journal of Medicine in June 2020. The study concluded that "After high-risk or moderate-risk exposure to COVID-19, hydroxychloroquine did not prevent illness compatible with COVID-19 or confirmed infection when used as postexposure prophylaxis within 4 days after exposure."

Breitbart's presentation of the "White Coat Summit" and the issues surrounding it was one-sided — and not on the side of the consensus of medical experts. None of the studies showing hydroxychloroquine to be ineffective were cited in two Breitbart articles that featured video of the entire press conference.

Breitbart's video of the press conference was removed by Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube for violating the platforms' policies on sharing COVID-19 misinformation. Multiple versions of the video were shared by President Trump, who has been promoting use of hydroxychloroquine, on his Twitter account. They, too, were removed by Twitter.

On July 28, 2020, Breitbart posted an article that included a video of another America's Frontline Doctors press conference, held that day in front of the U.S. Capitol, under the headline, "Watch Live: Silenced Frontline Doctors Hold Capitol Hill Press Conference to Challenge Big Tech." In the video, Dr. Simone Gold, leader of the group and an emergency medicine doctor in Los Angeles, repeated the claims about hydroxychloroquine being a cure for COVID-19. "Early COVID-19 can be cured when you take hydroxychloroquine and zinc early," Gold said. "That's the story. There's lots of data." Immanuel, the Texas doctor who appeared in the earlier video, added, "If they put everybody on hydroxychloroquine right now, for those with early disease and those that want to get prevention, I'm telling you, it would stop COVID in its tracks in 30 days."

As with the July 27 article, this Breitbart story did not mention the multiple clinical trials that have found hydroxychloroquine to be ineffective in treating COVID-

Asked about these articles in an August 2020 phone interview, Breitbart Editor-in-Chief Alex Marlow told NewsGuard that Breitbart's live-streaming of the America's Frontline Doctors' press conference did not mean that Breitbart endorsed or validated the claims of the doctors. "A portion of our content every day is merely providing video and/or transcripts of what newsmakers say without evaluating claims for accuracy one way or the other," Marlow said.

Marlow added that he considers holding a publisher to account for the third-party claims it reports to be a dangerous standard. "Fact-checks of news publishers who report direct and accurate quotations of public figures, newsmakers and elected officials sets a grave and dangerous precedent that threatens the most basic tenets of freedom of the press," he said.

Although it is true that Breitbart live-streamed the America's Frontline Doctors' press conference on July 27, 2020, the site also republished that video of the press conference after it originally aired — in an article published that same day about the removal of the press conference video by the major tech platforms. This article also neglected to mention the multiple clinical trials that have found hydroxychloroquine to be ineffective in treating COVID-19. In NewsGuard's judgment this is a failure to gather and present information responsibly that provides additional evidence of the failure of Breitbart to meet this standard, which we had already identified in our prior review.

Breitbart published other articles about America's Frontline Doctors that similarly omitted mention of the scientific evidence contradicting the doctors' claims about hydroxychloroquine. These included articles headlined "Twitter Censors Videos of Doctors' Capitol Hill Coronavirus Press Conference, Locks Breitbart Account;" "Watch – Censored Doctor: Facebook, YouTube Taking 'Draconian Measures' on Content that Goes Against W.H.O.;" and "Madonna Censored by Instagram for Posting Video of Frontline Doctors."

Addressing the site's coverage of hydroxychloroquine in general, Marlow said in an email to NewsGuard, "The role (if any) of HCQ (especially when combined with other medications) in treating some patients – and that answer may in turn depend on the stage of COVID-19, the condition of the patient, et al. – is undeniably the subject of genuine medical discussion and debate. Our coverage overall has attempted to showcase that discussion and debate, not take a position. But given that HCQ has been an FDA approved drug for decades and requires a prescription from a doctor to obtain, we do not believe we as non-doctors are obliged to fact-check licensed practicing physicians for expressing their first-hand clinical medical opinions."

In a follow up phone call in September 2020, Marlow said of the site's coverage of hydroxychloroquine: "We have not hyped this. It was a video that we streamed." He added that he believes that NewsGuard "cherry-picked" the story to make a case against Breitbart and that its coverage of the summit is not typical of the site's work.

Another July 27, 2020, article on the site about the "White Coat Summit" promoted another doctor's unsubstantiated claim in an article headlined "Watch— Doctor Dispels Coronavirus Fears: '99.8 Percent of People Get Through this with Little to No Progressive or Significant Disease.'"

The quote in the headline was from Dr. Dan Erickson, who co-owns an urgent care clinic in Bakersfield, California. The Breitbart article presented Erickson's 99.8 percent figure as fact, saying that he "addressed the dominant narrative of rising cases of the virus within the U.S. and pointed out that it is causing undue fear." The article also quoted Erickson as saying, "A case is a person, healthy, that tested positive. The vast majority. But the public hears cases and thinks, 'Oh my goodness. These are sick people!' No the vast majority — 99.8 percent of people get through this with little to no progressive or significant disease."

Neither Erickson nor Breitbart provided a source for this claim, which is not supported by any available evidence. According to a July 2020 article from fact-

checking website PolitiFact, citing data from The Atlantic's COVID Tracking Project, about 4 percent of all new confirmed COVID-19 cases require hospitalization. Earlier estimates placed the rate of serious infection higher. For example, a March 2020 report from the World Health Organization estimated that 15 percent of COVID-19 patients required oxygen support and 5 percent required ventilation.

After NewsGuard asked about this article, Breitbart updated it, changing the headline to "CA Doctor: '99.8% of People Get Through This with Little to No Progressive or Significant Disease.'" Language was changed throughout the story so that Erickson's claims were not presented as fact, and an editor's note was added to the story stating, "Breitbart News has updated this article since publication to indicate that we cannot confirm several of the claims made by Dr. Erickson highlighted in this article."

In his second phone interview with NewsGuard in September 2020, Marlow said that he believed it was "unrealistic that we would have gone through a full scientific fact check" of the content on the day of the event or even the next day. However, many other news organizations covered the event with factual context during and immediately after it occurred.

Opinion articles on Breitbart.com have also included misleading claims about the COVID-19 virus. For example, a May 2020 opinion article written by Breitbart editor-at-large John Nolte falsely claimed that for patients younger than 50 years old, COVID-19 has the same mortality rate as the seasonal flu.

"If you are under 50, the fatality rate for the coronavirus is just 0.1 percent, or 1 in 1000, which is the same as the everyday flu," Nolte wrote. He cited as a source a March 2020 graphic published by Business Insider that compared flu deaths in the U.S. with COVID-19 mortality rates in South Korea.

However, data that compares flu deaths to COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. does not support Nolte's claim.

Indeed, an updated version of the Business Insider graphic published in June 2020 found that the mortality

rate for COVID-19 was higher than the flu in every age group under 50. Additionally, Nolte appeared to cherry-pick the available data, using the 0.1 percent flu mortality rate that represented an average across all age groups, including those 50 and older, and comparing it to a COVID-19 mortality rate for those under 50.

Nolte made a similar claim in a June 2020 opinion article, stating that “It’s just a fact that if you’re under 50 years of age, the coronavirus is no more fatal than the seasonal flu.”

Although comparing disease death rates is complicated by the existence of asymptomatic COVID-19 cases, there is no basis for the claim that COVID-19 is no more deadly than the seasonal flu, and there is evidence that the opposite is true. A May 2020 study published in JAMA Internal Medicine found that in the U.S., weekly death tolls from COVID-19 in April 2020 were 20 times higher than the deadliest week of an average flu season. In March 2020, the World Health Organization stated on its website: “Mortality for COVID-19 appears higher than for influenza, especially seasonal influenza.”

Both of these articles were updated by Breitbart after NewsGuard asked about them in August 2020. An editor’s note was added to each of the articles, stating, “We have removed a statement comparing COVID-19 to the seasonal flu. Coronavirus appears at this time to be more deadly than the flu in the vast majority of demographics.”

~~In June 2020, Breitbart published an article with~~ inaccurate information about an Oakland man accused of murdering a federal security guard during a protest. The story, headlined “Suspect in Murder of California Cop Made Pro-Antifa, Anti-Police Posts on Facebook,” stated that a murder suspect “posted several times on Facebook in defense of Antifa.” The article was about U.S. Air Force Sgt. Steven Carrillo, who allegedly shot and killed a federal security guard and wounded his partner at a June 2020 protest in Oakland, California.

Carrillo was indicted for murder and attempted murder by a federal grand jury the same month and has pleaded not guilty.

According to the San Francisco Chronicle, prior to the alleged murder, Carrillo had posted on Facebook: “Who needs antifa to start riots when you have the police to do it for you.” However, this does not constitute a “defense of antifa” as Breitbart reported, and no other evidence pointing to an antifa connection has emerged.

On the contrary, a June 15, 2020, criminal complaint filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California included a section titled “Evidence ... Links CARRILLO to the “Boogaloo” Movement,” described in the filing as “a term used by extremists to reference a violent uprising or impending civil war in the United States.” The Associated Press reported that “Federal prosecutors have linked Carrillo ... to an extremist, anti-government group called the Boogaloo movement.” Boogaloo is a right-wing movement and a foe of antifa’s.

After NewsGuard inquired about this article, Breitbart updated the headline to remove mention of antifa and included an editor’s note indicating that Carrillo was affiliated with the Boogaloo movement.

The website has also published articles that misstate facts on climate change. For example, in a February 2019 article, titled “Delingpole: Alarmists Cook up Warming Scare as Planet Cools,” Breitbart columnist James Delingpole cited NASA and The Associated Press as identifying 2018 as the fourth warmest year on record. “If 2018 is not as hot as 2016, 2017, and 2015, that means the planet is cooling not warming,” Delingpole wrote.

The broad scientific consensus is that the planet is warming, not cooling. Although 2018 was, in fact, cooler on average than the prior three years, experts say that this short-term cooling trend can be largely attributed to the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) cycle, described by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as “a recurring climate pattern involving changes in the temperature of waters in the central and

eastern tropical Pacific Ocean,” which occurs over a period ranging between three and seven years. According to NOAA, the previous El Niño warming period ended in 2016, and the climate had been in a La Niña cooling period until May of 2018, which can explain the average temperature dip in 2018. Writing in the Washington Post in April 2018, meteorologist Matt Rogers explained the phenomenon of ENSO cycle variations, concluding that “Global warming isn’t a straight line. There will be record warm moments and not-so-warm moments, but overall the trend is upward.”

Other Breitbart articles have falsely equated weather with climate, pointing to single cold weather events as evidence against global warming.

A February 2019 article, headlined “Delingpole: The Frozen Hell Outside Your Window Is What Global Warming Looks Like,” aggregated Tweets that described recent cold weather in the U.S., including from climate-change denial accounts such as Watts Up With That. “Has the climate alarmism industry shown any contrition for its doomsday scaremongering about global warming? Absolutely none. Instead, it is doubling down,” Delingpole wrote.

On the difference between weather and climate, NASA has written: “Weather is what conditions of the atmosphere are over a short period of time, and climate is how the atmosphere ‘behaves’ over relatively long periods of time. When we talk about climate change, we talk about changes in long-term averages of daily weather.”

Asked about these stories, Solov said “We are not aware of any false facts in the cited articles.”

Older stories including inaccurate or misleading information remain on the site.

In 2016, Breitbart published an article alleging that the Obama administration had been supporting Al Qaeda and ISIS. The article, headlined “Hillary Clinton Received Secret Memo Stating Obama Admin ‘Support’ for ISIS,” started with the declaration that “Hillary Clinton received a classified intelligence report stating

that the Obama administration was actively supporting Al Qaeda in Iraq, the terrorist group that became the Islamic State.”

Fact-checkers FactCheck.org and PolitiFact reviewed the intelligence report cited in the Breitbart article and conducted interviews with national security experts and a spokesman for the White House and concluded that the claim that the report indicated the Obama Administration’s “support” for ISIS was false. “Experts say [the report] means that the United States shared an overarching goal with the opposition -- namely, countering Assad -- without actively supporting all elements of that opposition,” PolitiFact stated. The fact-checkers’ conclusions were echoed in reports in other news outlets, including ABC News, Politico, and Business Insider.

Asked about this article, which still appears on the site, Solov told NewsGuard in an email: “We did not allege that ‘the Obama Administration supported Al Qaeda.’ We reported the discovery by a Judicial Watch board member that Hillary Clinton received a copy of a memo that alleged that there was Obama Administration support for Al Qaeda. We accurately described the contents of the memo. We are not aware of any inaccuracy in our reporting.”

The site also posted stories in 2017 that related to a conspiracy theory that the Democratic National Committee was behind the murder of former DNC staffer Seth Rich. Breitbart based its coverage on a Fox News report claiming that Rich had leaked “thousands” of DNC emails to WikiLeaks. Fox retracted its story and issued a statement a week later, explaining that the story did not meet its editorial standards, and it has been widely reported that there is no evidence that Rich was the source of the DNC email leak.

In one of its initial articles about the death of Rich, “Silence from Establishment Media over Seth Rich WikiLeaks Report,” Breitbart described the Fox News report as “revealing that murdered DNC staffer Seth Rich had been in contact with Wikileaks.” Another

article, “Fox News: Seth Rich, Murdered DNC Staffer, ‘Leaked Thousands of Internal Emails to WikiLeaks,’” summarized Fox News’ initial report.

These two articles remained on the site without corrections or updates referencing the Fox retraction until April 2019, when, following conversations with NewsGuard, Breitbart appended the two stories with updates clarifying that Fox had retracted its initial report.

Articles that appear to be intended as news — because they are written by the site’s reporters, rather than its opinion columnists, and are not designated as columns — often contain opinionated language.

For example, a February 2019 article about Kamala Harris stated: “In case it was not obvious already that the establishment leftist media is in the tank for the Democrats against the Republicans, CNN’s Maeve Reston made it abundantly clear on Saturday when she tweeted about going shopping with 2020 Democrat presidential candidate Sen. Kamala Harris (D-CA).”

Another article from the same month, “Poll: Media’s All-Out Assault on Trump Only Hurts Trust in Journalists,” was not labeled as opinion and contained stated that “The media’s non-stop lying and fake news stories about the Russia Collusion Hoax has also backfired.”

Asked about the site’s inclusion of commentary in some of its news articles, Solov stated: “Breitbart clearly distinguishes between news and opinion pieces; and, as of several years ago, to make things even more clear, the latter typically have the author’s name in the headline followed by a colon. A handful of news articles on Breitbart do also contain some analysis of the facts, but those articles remain factually accurate. In those instances, by making the point of view of any analysis clear and not hiding it, rather than cloaking news stories under a cover of false objectivity (e.g., CNN, NYT, WashPo, Politico), we promote transparency and openness with our readers. The contrary approach, unlike Breitbart’s, is the exact opposite of untrustworthy and unreliable.”

In NewsGuard’s judgment, Breitbart has frequently misstated and distorted facts and has published unsubstantiated claims — including multiple claims related to COVID-19 cures — with little indication that the claims are not substantiated or credibly disputed. This seems often to be done to advance an undisclosed agenda. Moreover, the site includes opinion in news stories. For these reasons, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not gather and present information responsibly or handle the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

Breitbart has corrected errors by updating article text and adding an italicized correction notice to the top or bottom of the story — although many were updated years after they first appeared.

The 2013 article “Secret Hagel Donor?: White House Spox Ducks Question on 'Friends of Hamas,’” stated in the opening sentence: “On Thursday, Senate sources told Breitbart News exclusively that they have been informed that one of the reasons that President Barack Obama’s nominee for Secretary of Defense, Chuck Hagel, has not turned over requested documents on his sources of foreign funding is that one of the names listed is a group purportedly called ‘Friends of Hamas.’”

Following the publication of Breitbart’s article, it was widely reported — including in conservative outlets such as National Review and The American Conservative — that there was no evidence that Friends of Hamas existed, and the group’s name had stemmed from a joking conversation a New York Daily News reporter had with a Republican aide.

In August 2019, following discussions with NewsGuard, Breitbart appended an editor’s note to the top of the article stating: “We have since followed up on this story and we have found no confirmation that there is any such group as ‘Friends of Hamas,’ or that Senator Hagel received financial support of any kind from such a group. The original story continues below:”

In a September 2019 article, “Report: Intelligence Community Secretly Eliminated Requirement Whistleblowers Have Direct Knowledge of Alleged

Wrongdoing,” the site falsely reported that the intelligence community “secretly eliminated a requirement that whistleblowers provide direct, first-hand knowledge” to file a complaint. In fact, first-hand knowledge was never required of intelligence community whistleblowers to file a complaint, and such a requirement was not “secretly eliminated” prior to the August 2019 complaint.

In October 2019, Breitbart published the story “Fact Check: ‘Rules’ May Not Have Changed, But Whistleblower Form Did.” The story quote from the Washington Post fact-checker Glenn Kessler and correctly stated that no requirement of first-hand knowledge was eliminated.

When asked about the September story, Marlow told NewsGuard that he would review the article, but noted that it included reporting from The Federalist, “and we put it out there without endorsing it. I think that's pretty much industry standard, particularly in the new media world.” An update with the accurate information was added to the story in August 2020, almost a year after it was published.

Breitbart articulates a corrections policy on its Policy Information page, stating: “We are committed to accurate and factual reporting. When we learn about a rare inaccuracy, we correct the error as quickly as possible and run an update and/or editor’s note at the top and/or bottom of the article in question. A Contact Us link is located at the bottom of our website homepage, providing a form for readers to email comments and inquiries, including specifically concerns about factual inaccuracies.”

Breitbart has corrected many of the articles cited by NewsGuard as false or misleading and made other minor corrections without inquiries from NewsGuard. However, NewsGuard does not consider a corrections policy to be effective if many significant corrections are only issued after being alerted by NewsGuard. Moreover, the site still contains articles with inaccuracies, including articles that amplify unfounded claims that contradict scientific consensus

established by rigorous research, such as those about the effectiveness of hydroxychloroquine and the impact of climate change.

Therefore, NewsGuard has determined that as of September 2020 Breitbart does not meet NewsGuard's standard for correcting errors. We will continue to review the site to see if its policy becomes more consistent and does not rely so heavily on NewsGuard's requests for comment about unsubstantiated or false content after we discover it in one our regular reviews and updates.

Marlow disagreed with NewsGuard's conclusion, stating that "I've made a huge effort over the last couple years to respond very quickly" to emails about corrections, no matter who brings the matter to the site's attention. Addressing the site's correction to the story about Steven Carrillo specifically, he said, "As is the case with our 45,000 articles we publish a year, not every time are we going to go back and proactively update old stories that aren't on our front page and aren't being shared any longer."

In response to a question about Breitbart's reporting on the 2019 intelligence community Whistleblower, Marlow told NewsGuard that Breitbart's "core business is painting a picture day in and day out with our front page about social media, of what's happening in that moment in time. And if the thinking is that what we should be doing is when the facts change, we have to add the new facts to prior stories, then you can see how that's a rabbit hole that could really be wildly time consuming, I mean, I would have to add to the newsroom in orders of magnitude."

Transparency

Breitbart usually includes author names with its stories. Biographical information about the author is sometimes included at the bottom of stories, often with a link to a Twitter account.

The site also links to a section called People that contains videos of Breitbart staffers giving personal and professional testimonials, with the concluding line, "We are Breitbart."

After a previous version of this Nutrition Label was published, the site added a Masthead link at the bottom of the site, which takes readers to a page providing the names and positions of the site’s editorial leadership. A Contact Us page provides a form for visitors to email comments and inquiries.

The site makes no mention of its ownership – ownership that, given the political agenda of one of the major owners, is relevant. Breitbart has published at least one story mentioning the Mercers that did not disclose their ownership stake in the company.

“Breitbart News Network LLC is a privately held company,” Solov said in response to NewsGuard’s inquiry about the site’s lack of ownership disclosure. “Information about who owns it is, respectfully, not relevant to an analysis of the information that we publish. We therefore have no need or desire to list a breakdown of ownership information on our website.”

Most advertising on the site is distinguishable from editorial content. However, during its September 2020 review, NewsGuard found that the site was running a set of articles on the homepage under the heading “You May Like” and credited to RevContent, an advertising service. If readers click on the RevContent logo, an explanation about the paid content appears. However, many readers may click directly on the articles, which contain no such disclosure. This does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for clearly labeling advertising. Marlow did not respond to two NewsGuard’s emails seeking comment on the site’s approach to corrections.

History

Andrew Breitbart, who previously helped found the Huffington Post, launched Breitbart.com in 2005. Originally, the site simply collected headlines from around the internet, but later it began to publish original pieces. In 2011, Andrew Breitbart broke the story of then-U.S. Representative Anthony Weiner’s practice of sending lewd photographs to young women, which ultimately led to his resignation and criminal conviction.

Steve Bannon joined the website as executive chairman after Breitbart died suddenly in 2012. By then, Andrew Breitbart had become a leading voice on the right, prompting then-Republican presidential hopeful Newt Gingrich to call him “the most innovative pioneer in conservative activist social media in America.”

Bannon left Breitbart to take over as the chief executive of Donald Trump’s presidential campaign in August 2016. After Trump moved to the White House, Bannon joined the administration, bringing with him Breitbart writer Julia Hahn and editor Sebastian Gorka. Bannon left the administration in August 2017 and returned to Breitbart as executive chairman.

Upon announcing his return, Bannon gave an interview to The Weekly Standard in which he said he was returning to Breitbart and would have his “hands back on [his] weapons” to deploy against his, and Trump’s, enemies. “I am definitely going to crush the opposition,” Bannon said. “I can’t fight too many Democrats on the inside like I can on the outside.” He also said that he told Trump “I’ll always be here covering for you.”

Bannon resigned from Breitbart in January 2018 after author Michael Wolff quoted him making disparaging comments about Donald Trump Jr. and others in the Trump orbit in his book “Fire and Fury.”

Editor’s Note: This Nutrition Label was updated on Sept. 16, 2020, to add new examples of the site’s content relating to COVID-19 and other subjects and to reflect that NewsGuard has determined that Breitbart does not now have effective, consistent practices for publishing corrections and that it does not meet the standard for labeling advertising. The criteria checklist has been adjusted accordingly.

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