

trendingpolitics.com

An anonymously owned conservative news site that has published misleading and inaccurate information about COVID-19.



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

Score: 44.5/100

Ownership and Financing

TrendingPolitics.com does not provide information about its ownership to users. Website domain records show that the site was registered by Domains By Proxy LLC, a company that allows customers to shield their names and addresses from the public.

However, TrendingPolitics.com shares advertising codes with conservative news and commentary site ILoveMyFreedom.org. Links to TrendingPolitics.com's social media pages all direct visitors to the social media pages of ILoveMyFreedom.

The site generates revenue from advertising, sponsored content, and merchandise sales.

The website publishes a Partners page that asks users, "Get With Us And Make Some Money! Send Us An Email and Ask for Frank!" The page directs users to a form that will reach "Trending Politics' administrator."

Although "Frank" is not identified, Trending Politics links on its homepage to the Twitter account of Frank Bojazi, who has told NewsGuard he owns another conservative website, TrendingViews.co. Bojazi promotes Trending Politics on his personal Twitter account and on TrendingViews.co.

TrendingPolitics.com did not respond to two messages, sent through a general contact form on the site, seeking more information about its ownership. NewsGuard did not receive a response to a Facebook message sent to ILoveMyFreedom, and a response to a separate email sent in October 2020 to Bojazi, of TrendingViews.co.

- ✓ 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.](#)

Content

TrendingPolitics.com covers U.S. politics from a conservative perspective, providing extensive coverage of U.S. President Donald Trump and his administration, as well as of prominent Republicans and Democrats. A

banner at the top of the homepage says, “Trending Politics, Trump News, And Breaking News Updated 24/7.” The site’s sections include Trending News, Political News, Breaking News and Political Videos, and Political Articles.

The Political Videos section features clips from news organizations such as CNN and Fox News. The site also publishes internet memes that typically take aim at Democrats and liberals — such as a graphic juxtaposing House Speaker Nancy Pelosi with a vampire.

Typical stories have run under headlines including, “Democrat Lawmaker Admits to CNN: Trump’s Attacks on the Squad ‘Politically Brilliant,’” “Students Slam Trump’s Immigration Policy, Then Find Out Obama Actually Said It,” and “How A Real Man Behaves - President Trump.”

Credibility

TrendingPolitics.com does not provide original reporting. It generally adds commentary to reports by other news organizations, such as Fox News, Reuters, Politico, and The New York Times.

Although TrendingPolitics.com often cites reliable sources, the site has published inaccurate and misleading information about COVID-19.

For example, a July 2020 article advanced the false claims of Houston physician Dr. Stella Immanuel that the anti-malaria drug hydroxychloroquine cures COVID-19. The article on TrendingPolitics.com, titled “BREAKING: COVID Doctor Sounds The Alarm; Blasts Fake News, Challenges Cuomo To Take Urine Test,” reported on Immanuel’s assertions that she had successfully treated 350 COVID-19 patients with a mixture of hydroxychloroquine, zinc, and zithromax. According to the article, “every single patient recovered.”

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.

An August 2020 story advanced the false claim that deaths due to COVID-19 have been overcounted. The story, titled “These Three Factors are Leading to Massively Inflated COVID Death Counts,” cited reporting by RedState.com, a conservative news website that has published false information about the COVID-19 pandemic. The TrendingPolitics.com article listed three factors that the site claimed led to the inflated numbers of COVID-19 deaths. One of those factors was “a financial incentive to list COVID-19 as the reason for hospitalization,” TrendingPolitics.com stated.

TrendingPolitics.com, citing the RedState.com article, said, “Hospitals are being reimbursed for treating any uninsured patients they diagnose with COVID-19. Medicare is also paying out more when the COVID-19-box is checked.”

It is true that hospitals are being paid by Medicare to treat and care for COVID-19 patients at higher rates than for other respiratory diseases. However, there is no evidence to suggest that hospitals are over-reporting cases of the virus to exploit that policy. According to CMS, the exact payments depend on the cost of care required and are not incentives for hospitals.

Health care experts including National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Dr. Anthony Fauci and Sally Aiken, the president of the National Association of Medical Examiners, have dismissed the claim that deaths from the COVID-19 virus have been overcounted. Fauci told NBC in April 2020 that “there is absolutely no evidence that that’s the case at all,” and

Aiken, in an April statement to PolitiFact, said that “COVID-19 deaths will likely be under-reported on death certificates and not over-reported.

A September 2020 story misleadingly reported that COVID-19 has only caused 6 percent of deaths that have been attributed to the novel coronavirus.

The article, titled “DeBlasio Won't Re-Open Indoor Dining Because It Clashes With His Progressive Policies,” stated, “Earlier this week, the CDC reported on its website that only 6% of Covid-19 deaths have been exclusively caused by Coronavirus, meaning that 94% of those deaths were people with other conditions. It means that it is not Covid-19 itself that is reportedly killing people in 94% of those cases (as we have been led to believe), it is the factor of the co-morbidities.”

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states in an evolving public report of provisional COVID-19 death counts that “for 6% of the deaths, COVID-19 was the only cause mentioned.” The remaining fatalities, the report stated, involved on average 2.6 additional pre-existing conditions, including respiratory diseases, circulatory diseases, obesity, diabetes, and Alzheimer’s disease.

However, the fact that 94 percent of COVID-19 deaths involved complicating factors does not mean that those patients did not die from the coronavirus, and sources claiming otherwise are misrepresenting the CDC’s data. According to Dr. Robert Anderson, who oversees the CDC’s death statistics work, it is common for people to have more than one medical issue at the time of their death, and death certificates list all potential contributing causes to the death.

Fauci told ABC’s “Good Morning America” in September 2020 that the 6 percent figure “does not mean that someone who has hypertension or diabetes who dies of COVID didn’t die of COVID-19. So the numbers you’ve been hearing — there are 180,000-plus deaths — are real deaths from COVID-19. Let (there) not be any confusion about that.”

Because TrendingPolitics.com has published misleading and inaccurate information about COVID-19, NewsGuard has determined that the website does not gather and present information responsibly.

TrendingPolitics.com does not articulate a corrections policy. NewsGuard found two notes labeled as CORRECTION on the website, both of which were published in 2020. However, the corrections did not make clear what error was corrected. For example, the September 2020 article “CORRECTION: Fact Checkers Say It Was Not A Wire On Biden, But A ‘Shirt Crease’” cited fact-checks by Reuters and Politifact, which had debunked claims that former Vice President Joe Biden had worn “a wire” during the first 2020 presidential debate.

The article did not refer to any previous TrendingPolitics.com article, or explain whether the site had reported the inaccurate claims fact-checked by Reuters and Politifact.

Because these notes do not explain whether Trending Politics made an earlier mistake, and because NewsGuard could not find earlier examples of corrections on the site, NewsGuard has determined that TrendingPolitics.com does not effectively make corrections and clarifications.

Trending Politics’ About Us page discloses the website’s conservative orientation and mission to provide positive, opinionated coverage of President Trump. The page says, “Studies have shown that 90%+ of the stories about President Trump is negative, so we like to bring the other side of the story to you. With that being said, we aren’t shy to admit we’re biased. The majority of our articles will have a good amount of Pro-Trump opinion weaved into it.”

However, because the website publishes this opinion within stories it labels as news -- including Trending News, Political News, and Breaking News -- NewsGuard has determined that Trending Politics does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for handling the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

For example, in an October 2020 article labeled Political News and Trending News, titled “Petty Pelosi Hasn’t Spoken To Trump In A Year and She’s Proud Of It,” the author wrote, “When the history books are written about this tumultuous era and its toxic politics, any honest account will have to assign much of the blame to Speaker Nancy Pelosi. The octogenarian Democrat’s spite and hatred for President Trump have virtually paralyzed Congress, deprived Americans who have been devastated by COVID lockdowns of economic relief, and turned the House Of Representatives into a body that resembles the old Soviet Politburo.”

Another October 2020 article labeled as Political News and Trending News, headlined “BREAKING: United Kingdom Announces National Lockdown Over Coronavirus Surge,” called British Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s lockdown in the UK to prevent further spread of COVID-19 “a frightening turn of events that would become reality here in the United States if Joe Biden wins the election. He has already said he’d shut down the country again. Believe him when he says it.”

A November 2020 article that appeared in the Trending News section and was labeled Politics was headlined “BREAKING: Twitter Censored This Crucial Trump Tweet Just Hours Before Election Day.” After reporting that Twitter had removed a tweet from the president that suggested a Pennsylvania court ruling on elections would lead to violence, the author wrote, “This is ELECTION INTERFERENCE! Everything President Trump said is TRUE! Don’t let them steal this election! Go out and VOTE VOTE VOTE!”

TrendingPolitics.com did not respond to three messages, sent through a general contact form on the site, seeking comment on its editorial practices, including its inaccurate reporting on COVID-19, approach to corrections, and mixing of news and opinion. NewsGuard also did not receive a response to a Facebook message sent to ILoveMyFreedom, the Facebook account that regularly publishes content from TrendingPolitics.com.

Headlines, while often opinionated, typically reflect the content of stories.

Transparency

TrendingPolitics.com does not disclose its ownership or identify its editorial leadership. The site features a generic contact form for users to ask questions.

TrendingPolitics.com did not respond to three messages sent through the contact form, seeking comment on why it does not disclose its ownership or identify its editorial leaders.

The site generally names its authors and provides links to their social media pages.

Advertising is distinguishable from original content.

History

TrendingPolitics.com was created in April 2019, based on WHOIS registration information and archived versions of the site.

Editor's Note: Upon further review and discussion of NewsGuard's standard of handling the difference between news and opinion responsibly, this Nutrition Label was updated on Nov. 3, 2020, to reflect NewsGuard's determination that TrendingPolitics.com does not meet this standard. NewsGuard is reversing its Oct. 22, 2020, decision that had determined the website met its opinion criteria. In its October 2020 update, NewsGuard also determined that TrendingPolitics.com no longer meets NewsGuard's standard for gathering and presenting information responsibly. The criteria checklist has been adjusted accordingly.

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

Sources

Ownership and Financing

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