

# NewsGuard










## America's Last Line of Defense Network

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One site in a network that publishes false stories and hoaxes that are often mistaken for real news, run by hoax perpetrator Christopher Blair.

 20 / 100

**Proceed with Maximum Caution:** This website is unreliable because it severely violates basic journalistic standards.

-  Does not repeatedly publish false or egregiously misleading content 22 points
-  Gathers and presents information responsibly 18
-  Has effective practices for correcting 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

## Ownership and Financing

The America's Last Line of Defense network is owned and operated by Christopher Blair, who has been called "one of internet's most notorious hoaxers," by the Poynter Institute for Media Studies. Blair, a former construction worker who lives in Maine, runs a network of approximately 20 sites that describe themselves as satire, but are regularly shared as real news from credulous social media users.

NewsGuard has identified approximately 40 domains associated with the network in the past. As of July 2023, only nine of those domains were active, including Dunning-Kruger-Times.com, PotatriotsUnite.com, DailyWorldUpdate.us, and BustaTroll.org..

The sites run ads, but Blair told The Boston Globe in April 2018 his ad revenue was dwindling due to Facebook algorithm changes and a growing awareness about disinformation on the internet. "We've known for a long time that this would turn into a labor of love, and we'll gladly volunteer to keep doing it," Blair said.

## Content

Blair's sites typically run a banner at the top of each story featuring the phrase "America's Last Line of Defense," which is also Blair's main Facebook Page. Under that title is a warning that says "Information You Probably Shouldn't Trust."

Blair's other sites typically have an About page copied from America's Last Line of Defense as well. The pages say America's Last Line of Defense is "a whimsical playland of conservative satire" and that "everything on this website is fiction." For example, America's Last Line of Defense published a headline in October 2018 titled "Report: George Soros BOUGHT His US Citizenship From a President with Cash."

Blair told The Boston Globe that his sites publish fake stories to demonstrate how easy it is to get conservatives to believe false information. Blair said he publishes fake content and then he and his friends mock, and sometimes report, the social media accounts that share them.

“We’re trolling conservative low-hanging fruit and having them removed from Facebook,” Blair told the Globe. “You post nonsense, they respond, you and your friends make them look foolish.”

A writer who works for Blair told the Boston Globe that he was “holding up a mirror to actual stuff conservatives say on a daily basis... I’m injecting them with stupidity to cure their stupidity.”

## **Credibility**

Blair’s sites make up events, quotes, and details. For example, in 2018 the now-defunct site Dildothedonald.us published a story announcing the death of former president Bill Clinton. Nofakenewsonline.us published a story saying that Sen. John McCain’s death had been ruled suspicious. AmericasLastLineofdefense.org ran a story that said the doctor at Barron Trump’s school said the boy “has absolutely no D.N.A.” Wearehellod.com published the headline “9th Circuit Court of Traitors Clears Hillary Clinton of All Charges.”

Another Blair website called ConservativeTears.com, which is subtitled “Death Hoaxes For Your Thoughts And Prayers,” regularly makes up stories about the deaths of famous people. A 2018 story falsely reported the death of actor Jon Voight, a supporter of U.S. President Donald Trump, and said that the president would be speaking at his funeral. In April 2020, the website featured false stories about the deaths of actor Tom Hanks, ‘Star Trek’ actor William Shatner, and media mogul Rupert Murdoch.

The sites typically disclose they are publishing false information in multiple places, such as in the banner at the top of each page (“Information You Probably

Shouldn't Trust"), and in About Us pages. Individual stories are tagged as "Satire" or "Death Hoax" after an author's byline.

However, no disclaimer appears next to the headline when a story is shared on social media, so it is not always clear to readers that it is made up.

In an email to NewsGuard, Blair defended his work and emphasized its status as satire. "At some point, people need to be held responsible for what they believe," he wrote, arguing that by fooling and shaming readers who believe his work, he is performing a service that can curb belief in misinformation online. "We go out of our way to make sure it couldn't possibly look real," he added, noting that his sites provide more disclosures than the popular satire site The Onion to indicate that the content is fake.

Blair said his sites "are neither news nor information" and therefore "don't qualify to be judged by your [NewsGuard's] standards."

However, because so many readers have believed, shared, and amplified the falsehoods in the sites' stories -- which are not labeled when readers encounter them on social media or in search results -- NewsGuard has decided to review and rate the sites.

Because the America's Last Line of Defense Network regularly fabricates articles, headlines, and quotations, NewsGuard has determined that the websites repeatedly publish false content, do not gather and present information responsibly, and do not avoid deceptive headlines.

The websites have not corrected articles and do not articulate corrections policies.

The America's Last Line of Defense network does not typically publish opinion content.

## Transparency

The network’s About pages, which are signed by Blair, say “This and all of my sites are financed solely by me and the revenue all goes directly to me. Writers ... are compensated by me, at my discretion.” NewsGuard has determined that this statement meets its standard for revealing ownership, but does not meet its standard for revealing who is in charge.

Articles on Blair’s sites are credited to pseudonyms such as “Skywell Hsnopeen” and “Flagg Eagleton,” which does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for providing information about content creators.

“We’re satire. Our content creators use satirical pen names,” Blair told NewsGuard in a 2020 email.

Although some display advertising is distinguished from editorial content, the websites embed polls and questions, which are typically about politics, within articles. The polls, which direct users to an outside advertiser’s firm, are labeled as “promoted content,” which does not meet NewsGuard’s standard for clearly labeling advertising.

Blair told NewsGuard in a 2020 email, “The ads are clearly labeled, whether you choose to say so or not.”

## History

In 2014, Blair first gained headlines as Busta Troll, a liberal social media prankster. As Busta Troll, Blair conned his way into becoming an administrator of a prominent page dedicated to criticizing former prisoner of war Bowe Bergdahl, in order to replace all the page’s content with pictures of goats.

*Editor’s Note: This Nutrition Label was updated on July 27, 2023. This label was previously updated on Aug. 5, 2022, and on Nov. 16, 2021.*

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## Sources

### Ownership and Financing

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### Content

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### Credibility

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## History

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