

# How the Leftmedia Really Blew It

They didn't misread opinion; they tried to dictate it. By Allyne Caan · Nov. 10, 2016



When Election Day arrived, The New York Times' [online election forecaster](#) gave Hillary Clinton an 85% chance of winning; Trump, 15%. While the Times admitted a Trump victory was “possible,” they deemed Clinton’s chances of losing “about the same as the probability that an N.F.L. kicker misses a 37-yard field goal.” Kick — no good.

As results began coming in, though, the lines on the Times' Clinton-Trump victory probability graph began closing in on each other. Then, the unthinkable happened: those lines crossed. Trump’s odds bested Clinton’s, and hours before the race was called, the Times gave Trump a 95% chance of coming out on top.

While the big story is, of course, the election outcome, the story behind the story is media malpractice. It’s not that the media and pollsters misread the opinions of the American electorate; it’s that they were trying to dictate opinion to the American electorate — pollaganda — using polling as propaganda to influence public opinion rather than gage it.

Ironically, just a couple of months ago, NY Times columnist Jim Rutenberg [argued](#) on the Times' *front page* that journalists covering Trump had a responsibility to be biased — that they would “have to throw out the textbook.” In fact, the Times' Senior Editor for Politics, Carolyn Ryan, called Trump’s candidacy “extraordinary and precedent-shattering” and that “to pretend otherwise is to be disingenuous with readers.” Thus the need for skewed coverage.

And yet, the media failed to see the real reason for Trump’s looming victory: voter anger at the elite media establishment.

Faced with the fact of journalism's great failure, Rutenberg this week wrote, "All the dazzling technology, the big data and the sophisticated modeling that American newsrooms bring to the fundamentally human endeavor of presidential politics could not save American journalism from yet again being behind the story, behind the rest of the country. The news media by and large missed what was happening all around it. ... The numbers weren't just a poor guide for election night — they were an off-ramp away from what was actually happening."

The Washington Post's Margaret Sullivan echoed this observation: "To put it bluntly, the media missed the story. In the end, a huge number of American voters wanted something different. And although these voters shouted and screamed it, most journalists just weren't listening."

In other words, the media didn't want to believe Trump could win, so they looked the other way. "It would be too horrible," Sullivan wrote. "So, therefore, according to some kind of magical thinking, it couldn't happen." By her explanation, the media couldn't believe such a bigoted misogynist racist might win. Of course, this same media had no problem helping a traitor who jeopardized national security and left Americans to die while scapegoating a filmmaker.

In truth, journalists didn't take some sort of moral high ground by ignoring the possible; they became the bigots they claim to hate. As The Wall Street Journal's James Taranto writes, "It's not just that journalists were naïve or even ignorant, it's that their work was suffused with hostility, even bigotry. ... Motivated by prejudice, many in the media threw aside standards of fairness and balance and even the pretense thereof. That didn't prevent a Trump presidency and might even have helped bring it about."

We'd argue it definitely helped bring it about. Telling the electorate that Hillary was right about them being "irredeemable" and a "basket of deplorables" created a predictable backlash.

The mainstream media has so enclosed itself in the bubble of liberal elitism that they think their world *is* the world. And they need their own "safe spaces" when their world is challenged.

It's little wonder, then, that after living so long in a state of denial, the media melted down over Trump's win. ABC's Terry Moran called it "a rejection of the neo-liberal world order that, uh, really has been the consensus of governments across the West and across the world for a generation." CNN's Van Jones said people are asking, "How do I explain this to my children?" and called the results a "whitelash against a black president." And MSNBC's ever classy Rachel Maddow told her viewers, "You're not dead and you haven't gone to hell. This is your life now." (As Mike Huckabee joked, "It's true. TVs in Hell only show MSNBC.")

In reality, the media missed the story not out of error or ineptitude but out of willful narrow-mindedness that simply couldn't admit there is a world out there that doesn't think like they do. It's called America.