



Hello!

Don't cover elections.

Please stop.

I'm serious.

How often do elections take place? At most twice a year. And yet we hear about it all the time. Who might run for president? Who is polling better than a place-holder opponent? Who is taking a cabinet position this year in hopes of running for president in seven?

If it were only the election coverage, I think I could handle it. But for some reason, everything that happens in the whole fucking world has to be interpreted in the context of elections. War breaks out and we wonder whether it means the President is more or less likely to be re-elected. The economy collapses and we wonder how the party in power will "spin it." Well I don't fucking care.

To be clear, I am not blind to the differences between the two political parties. And I am not so cynical as to belittle the impact of those differences. I genuinely believe that the democratic process is valuable. I just think that you need to take your grubby little mitts off of it!

Hopefully someday you can come back to covering elections where appropriate, but right now you need a little breather.

Think about it like a tolerance break. If you have a drink every night when you come home from work, it might start as a fun little ceremony to help you unwind. But before you'd believe it, you're having a drink every time some new polling numbers come out of Pennsylvania, even when the next presidential election isn't for fucking years. If you take a month away, you can let some of those cycles unwind.

"What does that have to do with me?" you might be saying. "That story is about developing self-destructive patterns. The patterns my colleagues and I have developed are destructive to the entire world. They just don't really feel comparable."

I understand where you are coming from. In many ways, you are absolutely right. But I think that there is still something you can take away from my example. In taking a tolerance break, maybe ten years or something chill like that, you can really take a moment to explore the many things beyond elected officials impacting life every day and find new lenses through which to see familiar stories.

Frankly, I find it incredibly frustrating that the solutions to so many problems in the world seem confined to what people believe Congress can or cannot accomplish. How incredibly limiting! They struggle to accomplish even basic things. And in instances where solutions exist but the political wherewithal to enact them doesn't, I would rather hear about those solutions from experts in the field than listen to the same camera-hungry politicians spin. Then--when I am done reading the news for the day--I will at least better understand the world around me; rather than just the hyper-coordinated drama from a club of overfunded yet boring nerds.

I'm sure someone reading this somewhere is probably mad that I'm "ignoring that part of the goal of journalism is to hold politicians accountable." And I understand their concern. I guess I would just like to know when and where exactly that is happening.

In fact, I would argue that the current approach is more successful at centering and platforming those who benefit from distorting the truth than acting as any sort of fact checker or punitive presence. If your best weapon against politicians actively lying is to print the lies and then say that *some of their colleagues* are *critical* of these *comments*, then I'd rather you leave the whole thing alone. If you can't call people lying liars and you can't call people acting bigotedly bigots and you can't call people acting corruptly corrupt, then what good are you? If you need to keep some sort of scientific remove, then write about rocks!

"You know what?" you reply. "I know that a lot of my colleagues wish that we could do more in depth and issue focussed stories. But we are running a business here. In reality, these are the stories people want."

Well, when you are right, you are right. Everyone I know is very happy with the quality of news they receive. Now would probably be a terrible time to try something new. (The italics indicate sarcasm.)

When I think about the number of wars, famines, religious movements, artistic inventions, and scientific developments that will never get as much news coverage as one fucko vaping at a *Beetlejuice* musical, it feels cancerous. The world is so big and beautiful and terrifying and complicated. So when I compare how many things impact people's lives every day with how rarely congress passes meaningful legislation or how infrequently incumbent candidates lose elections--it just seems so shittingly fucked that we spend this much time trying to understand our big, beautiful, terrifying, and complicated word through this intentionally cloudy prism.

So in conclusion, make some huge changes. Please. It's for the best.

Sincerely,
The East Nebraska Secret Commune Social Quarterly