

# Bernie's Q&A: Stewart, Lemon, Watters, and more! (5/3) – Premium Interactive (\$4 members)



Welcome to this week's **Premium Q&A** session for *Premium Interactive* members. I appreciate you all signing up and joining me. Thank you.

Let's get to your questions (and my answers):

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As a journalist, are you ever embarrassed for the profession when networks like CNN and "hosts" (like Don Lemon and Chris Cuomo) act as though they are truly unbiased, truth seekers and acting as watchdogs for government overreach? For example, if Trump people were given immunity the way Hillary people were, do you think that CNN would totally ignore that as they did with Hillary's group? Though as I write that, I realize that is a dumb question as the answer is obvious. – James G.

Not a dumb question, James, but they're the ones who should be embarrassed for what they've done to journalism. IF they don't know how biased they are, then they're delusional. If they do, then they're corrupt. Either way, there's a great big problem. I've never seen the media as bad as it is in the age of Trump. He brings a lot on himself. But just because they loathe him, doesn't give them carte blanche to beat up on him. Even liberals notice the bias. And the credibility of the profession sinks.

**Hi Bernie. Really love your takes on bias in Media as a freelancer in sport. I work in a western European country we have a mainstream media that is generally liberal and left like the rest of the West with few truly neutral or conservative voices. I don't mind sports reporters having political/social/moral beliefs or opinions. I just don't like them making expressing those beliefs more important than their actual work covering sport. As someone working in Sports Reporting it bothers me that those in a freelance capacity like myself can't bring the issue up with those who avail of my services for fear of losing work. How would you suggest bringing this up in a professional way? – A Sports Writer**

You're right. If as a freelancer you challenge the biases, you could lose work. Vent right here with me, but don't do anything foolish. At some point in your career you may have the money and the clout to speak your mind. But I suspect that time hasn't yet arrived. Consider me a friend you can chat with.

**Mr. Goldberg, I enjoyed your book ["100 People Who Are Screwing Up America"](#). As I recall, you went on the Daily Show to discuss the book and Jon Stewart smugly dismissed the book because it included many perceived unimportant people rather than (presumably conservative) lawmakers. Did he not read the book like the hosts of another show you were on or do you think he just missed (or ignored) the point that many of these so-called unimportant people were actually symptoms of larger**

**problems in our culture? Also did you hear back directly from any of the people on the list of 100? – Brian**

In fairness to Mr. Stewart, his position was that what government did was more important than what those who influence the culture did. It's not a crazy position. My book was about the culture – and those who were, in my opinion, screwing things up. Reasonable people can disagree on which takes a greater toll on the nation – government or a crummy culture.

I heard from the head of the ACLU who was very polite and wanted to meet me so he could explain the ACLU to me. The ball was in my court and I never followed through. But again, he was quite civil about the whole thing.

Howard Stern said something about it on his radio show ... and Jerry Springer did too. Neither was especially upset. They may have even been flattered.

**Hello, mr. Goldberg! I have followed your work since I found one of your books in the Stanford campus bookstore during a visit from Sweden (my country of origin and where I am currently). I am interested in your take on which president has eroded the least amount of liberty from the American people and why? – Carl-Simon P.**

Glad to hear that one of my books made it into the Stanford University bookstore. I spoke to a class at Stanford a few years ago. The students seemed interested. The professor – and a few others who came in to listen – weren't impressed. They all worked for major newspapers before arriving at Stanford – and didn't believe what I was saying about bias. Let's just say I wasn't shocked.

Now to your question: Not sure what you mean by "eroded the least amount of liberty." Does that mean ... which president took away less liberty? In any case, I'm not a historian so I'm not equipped to answer your question.

Even though you're not asking this, let me say that in a country of more than 300 million people, I'm constantly amazed that the choice for president so often comes down to the kind of people who get the nominations. Hillary and Donald are two good examples. Better people, I guess, are smart enough not to enter politics in the first place.

Over the years, I've heard people like Juan Williams and the late Alan Colmes referred to as Fox News's "token liberals." The implication being that they're not skilled or particularly effective liberal commentators, but rather dupes (or foils) for network's Republican/pro-Trump hosts to take a partisan hatchet to.

While there's certainly truth to the idea that they're often placed into "fall guy" positions (outnumbered and beat-up on for the pleasure of FNC's right leaning audience), I don't feel like they're intellectually inferior to, or any less effective than, the liberal commentators found on the liberal networks. In fact, I think people like Williams (while overtly partisan at times) put a better, more reasonable face on liberalism than the others.

What are your thoughts on this topic, and can you share some personal views on Williams and the late Alan Colmes. – Jen R.

I agree with you, Jen, that they're not intellectually inferior or any less effective than liberal pundits on other channels. But on those other channels it's the conservative who's a token.

I think they're all referred to as "tokens" not because of anything to do with brainpower, but as my dictionary defines "token": "a member of a group (such as a minority) that is included within a larger group ... a token employee." That's how they use the word.

I have spoken to Juan on several occasions. I like him personally and think he's quite bright – smarter than several

conservatives at Fox, whose names I won't bother to mention.

Alan was a good guy too, but when he was teamed up with Hannity, he had a role to play. He believed in what he said, I have no doubt about that ... but he always had to take the liberal position to conform with the show's format. I once made a point on that show and Alan said something that kinda, sorta annoyed me. I looked at him and said something like, "Have you heard a single word I just said?" He had. But, as I say, he had a role to play.

**Bernie-** There's been an emergence of young, knowledgeable, articulate conservative voices, such as Ben Shapiro, Candace Owens, Dave Rubin, as well as the folks at Campus Reform, the College Fix, & the Daily Wire. My observation is that these folks are making headway with thoughtful young voters through social media to a degree greater than the publicity around these groups would appear to demonstrate. Meanwhile, I am pretty sure that Brad Parscale is aware of this group of voters, and influencers. I also think this group I refer to could affect the 2020 election while not necessarily influencing the polling leading to the election. Do you have any opinion about this subject? – Joseph R.

Here's my opinion, Joseph: I hope you're right.

I hope they are making headway as you suggest. I hope they are swaying young voters. Not sure why you think they might not influence the polling. Because they only have cell phones and some polling calls mainly landlines? Also not sure there are enough of those young people moving to the conservative side to have a great affect on the 2020 election. But as I say, I hope you're right.

**Hey Bernie,** What did you think of the 1999 film, "The Insider," about the 60 Minutes / big tobacco story? You were still at CBS News when this was going on. – Thomas K.

Here's what Jeff Fager, then the executive producer of the CBS

Evening News and who later took over at 60 Minutes said about what was going on at the network:

“It was a low point in our history and it wasn’t, I think, anybody’s fault at the broadcast,” Fager says. “60 Minutes was under incredible pressure from the corporation.”

He’s right. CBS was in the process of being sold and CBS management was worried about a multi-billion dollar lawsuit that might screw up the deal. The legal department ordered 60 Minutes not to run the story – and as I recall the top management of the news division went along with the order.

That’s what really annoyed a lot of CBS News people. The Wall Street Journal scooped 60 Minutes with a front page story. Nine days later 60 Minutes ran its story.

The story was of huge importance. Fager said, “This was a watershed moment in understanding what cigarette smoke does and the company’s complicity in trying to get people addicted.”

But here’s the most “important” part: I’m in the movie. Or more accurate, my name is. The character playing Dan Rather is on a TV set in the background and says something like “Tonight on Bernard Goldberg’s America ...” and a nanosecond later the Mike Wallace character blows up upon hearing news CBS won’t run his story. The blowup stole the scene. But I was in the movie, for a brief moment.

*Editor’s note: Here’s that brief moment (graphic language warning):*

**Hello Bernie. Longtime fan of your columns and really enjoyed watching your segments on O’Reilly, even moreso when you were allowed to finish your point without interruption. Regarding the Talking Heads seen on the cable news channels... I’ve often wondered if some of them really believe in what they’re saying and the positions they take, or if it was just an act for when**

they were on-air. Have you ever talked to someone in a Green Room, etc.. who appeared to be a mild-mannered centrist but then turned into a raging left/right wing pundit when in front of the camera? And a second, baseball related question if you have room and time: What are your thoughts about the "Designated Hitter" possibly coming to the National League? As somewhat a baseball purist who prefers the National League (and specifically the Atlanta Braves) I would hate it to see it happen. But I also realize MLB is trying to broaden interest in their product and another hitter in the line-up could mean more action, scoring, etc... – Barry R.

The only person who was really different off the air than on the air was ... wait for it ... Bill O'Reilly. Off the air he's really low key. I pointed this out to him once, in a car heading to dinner, and he said, he could never keep up the on air Bill off the air because it would be too exhausting. I never told that story publicly before, Barry.

As for the baseball question: Isn't there an old saying about how baseball is a perfect game except for ... the designated hitter? As a purist, I can understand why you're against it. I've accepted it, but the reason it's there at all is because of what you say: MLB was trying to get another big hitter in the lineup to please the customer. Purists weep. But baseball is a business, after all.

A lot of Fox News hosts have turned into Trump advocates in recent years. However it's still weird to watch someone like Jesse Watters righteously scold Trump's critics, then when called out for a double standard (like when Trump has done the same thing as his critics), smirk and jokingly say something like "I'm not going to talk about that," or "It's not the same, and we'll leave it at that." His other hosts on the Five laugh, because he's basically admitting that he's just playing a character role and has no principled/sincere argument. And he seems quite proud of it.

**My question: If a commentator on a news network basically admits on the air that he's full of crap, and is just saying whatever he is saying to fire up the audience, why do producers allow it? I understand the difference between reporting and analysis, but doesn't "fake" or "admittedly unfair" analysis make a mockery of the network? – Edward D.**

I like this question, Edward. Re Jesse Watters: He's an embarrassment. And I blame Bill O'Reilly for his climb up the Fox ladder— Bill having featured him on the Factor. He cannot and should not be taken seriously. Nor should anyone else who employs the double standard you correctly mention. But it's not the producers who allow it. They're part of the problem.

Fox, like CNN and MSNBC, makes money by reinforcing the biases of the audience. The producers would howl if Jesse or anyone else said, I criticized Obama for such and such and now I'm going to bash Trump for doing the same thing.

And yes, it makes a mockery of the network. But the people in charge not only don't care – they want it that way. Partisans like Jesse Watters are what Fox wants on its air. Pathetic!

**Hi Bernie – In your book, "100 People Who Are Screwing Up America", George Soros was #19. I thought for sure his money and influence would keep Trump from becoming President. If he thought Bush was a Nazi, what is Trump? Would he move up on your list if you were to write the book with today's top 100? I know you swore off writing any more books, but how about a quick top five list for 2019? Enjoying my membership. – Evelyn**

Here are a few more than 5 ... in no particular order:

Jeff Zucker – for screwing up CNN

Joe Scarborough – for losing his mind and not realizing it

Dean Baquet, exec editor NY Times – for letting so much bias creep into his news coverage

Jim Acosta – for corrupting the role of White House Correspondent

Adam Schiff – because his passive-aggressive manner annoys the hell out of me

Rob Reiner/Robert De Niro – as representatives of liberal Hollywood hate and intolerance

Elite University Presidents – who not only cave to liberal snowflakes, but actually condone and agree with their authoritarian anti-liberal behavior

Jussie Smollett – because race isn't something you fool around with in America

(Note to my liberal friends: Donald Trump is not on this list for two reasons. 1. he's done a lot of good, the economy for example. 2. He's in a class all by himself)

**Given the benign perception of socialism provided by the mainstream media, will its Totalitarian Dictatorship take hold again if the people give Bernie Sanders their full support. Enemies of the State etal? – Joseph V.**

If Bernie Sanders is elected president ... and if both Houses of Congress wind up in Democratic hands ... We are all in trouble. They will run the country into the ground and (as I've said before) may even pass laws banning certain speech. The news media are supposed to be the watchdog, the entity that holds powerful politicians accountable. Tell me when you stop laughing.

**I always enjoy your commentary; so to speculate, do you know if the citizens and government people currently in Vietnam have warmer feelings toward the United States than say, roughly fifty years ago? Thanks again –The Emperor**

Do the Vietnamese like us more today than in 1969? Is that your question? Yeah, i'm pretty sure they do since in 1969 we

were bombing the hell out of them.

**What you wrote in this week's column (["Free Stuff Can Be Very Expensive"](#)) is all very true, but there must be a way to approach the student debt crisis. Reform of bankruptcy code? Suggestions? – Ronald M.**

Way over my pay grade. No idea. If a college has a very big endowment, the trustees might want to think about forgiving the debt or at least reducing it. But how are students whose debt wasn't forgiven or reduced going to feel about that? It's a mess, Ronald.

**Greetings Mr. Goldberg: In an effort to help you kill some time between now and mid-December (wink wink), I wish to hear your opinion. I understand that Walter Duranty was very sympathetic to Soviet Communism, and he won a Pulitzer Prize for his articles. Eventually I believe the NY Times acknowledged how blatantly biased he was by downplaying the horrors of life in Soviet Russia. I'm wondering, if many others saw how awful it was in Russia, why did the NY Times in those days give any credence to what this man wrote? And why did so many people who came from Russia to the U.S. want to bring that lifestyle TO the U.S.? What was the appeal to the "Useful Idiots" in the U.S. who actually were living a decent lifestyle? Until mid-December –Best Regards from The Emperor**

Durante was there, on the ground in Russia. His editors were thousands of miles away in Manhattan. They figured he knew what he was writing about. And who knows how many of them were also sympathetic to the idea of communism.

Communism for some Americans was an appealing idea – especially during the Great Depression, The Communist Party USA promised jobs to desperate people. A lot of them didn't like the authoritarian part of communism; that's not what they were buying into. It was the promise of not just a better life, but simply a job.

It's possible, Emperor, to have a decent lifestyle and still be wooed by a philosophy that says everyone should have that decent life, not just the fat cats or people with connections.

The problem with all of this is simply that communism doesn't work; it's a disaster; it goes against human nature.

**Bernie, many of us come up with costs for programs proposed by the Democrat presidential contestants, but we likely are not dealing with accurate information. Can you give us a list of those proposals and what they will cost? This will help us create powerful rebuttals. – Hugo S.**

I included a short list of what Democrats are offering for "free" or at least heavily subsidized in my column about how Free Stuff Can Be Very Expensive. As for the costs, they're all over the place. I suggest you see what each candidate is offering and what each claims their giveaways would cost and how they all plan to raise the money to pay for this free stuff. There's just too much for me to dig out, Hugo. Hope you understand.

**Thank you for the ["Free Stuff"](#) article. I've often thought how easy it is to run as a liberal. Just stand up and announce what you are going to give away and listen to the cheers. Surprised no one has thought of free lobster dinners for everyone! The reality of your point that Republicans have to explain why this doesn't work is frightening. It's not obvious by now? It is an embarrassment that even members of Congress need this explained to them, let alone voters. On another subject, do you have any information as to the Statute of Limitations for the officials involved with possible corruption regarding FISA abuse, obstruction of justice, leaks, perjury, and other crimes currently under investigation at Justice? Having been in business, I am always puzzled as to why it takes months and even years for the government to get to the bottom of a story and hold people accountable, when it would take a few hours to do the same in a business. – Michael E.**

What the GOP needs to explain – very specifically – is that the very people getting the “free” stuff at some point will be asked to pay for it too. They already know there’s no such thing as “free” stuff. What they don’t know is that their taxes might go up along with the tax increase on wealthier people. That’s what the GOP needs to explain. People who like “free” stuff don’t understand this. And it’s not entirely their fault. The progressives tell them the “super rich” will pay for everything.

I don’t think the statue of limitations is the issue so much as congressional bureaucracy is the issue. Like you, I follow congressional investigations and can’t quite grasp why they go on and on – with no resolution. Maybe the GOP is afraid to bring charges against Democrats because they know Democrats will repay the “favor” when they get the chance.

I was never a Washington correspondent so I don’t know enough to answer your question any better.

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Thanks, everyone! You can send me questions for next week **using the form below!** You can also read previous Q&A sessions by [clicking here](#).

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# **Bernie's Q&A: Mark Levin, Michelle Obama, Ginsburg, Reagan, "What's the Frequency, Kenneth?" and More (4/26)**

Welcome to this week's **Premium Q&A** session for *Premium Interactive* members. I appreciate you all signing up and joining me. Thank you.

Let's get to your questions (and my answers):

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**I recall even before Israel had built walls, the borders were still relatively secure compared to what is going on at our Southern border. I believe they merely relied on the governments in the neighboring countries to provide security by holding their leadership responsible for any issues. Don't you think if we were serious we could do the same? Maybe an F22 Raptor buzzing Mexico City would make a point that needs to be made? – Michael E.**

For some reason the U.S. government has not been able to convince our neighbors to the South to stop the caravans. Cutting off aid to Honduras and Guatemala is tempting but it'll make things worse. It'll drive more immigrants north. Mexico is the key. No one comes up from Guatemala without passing through Mexico. Mexico doesn't have to let the immigrants in. Whatever Mexico is doing to help hasn't been enough – but now there may be some good news. Mexico in

recent days has been cracking down on immigrants, rounding some up – but who knows how long this will last or what long term affect it will have on the caravans heading our way.

As for your idea about sending low flying F22s over Mexico City – a tad over the line, Michael. A tad.

**Is there not one “journalist” in this country that wonders why Bryan Pagliano, the man that set up Hillary Clinton’s private server, was given immunity? He never was charged with anything. As far as I know he never gave up any actionable information. Usually someone trades information to get out of trouble. He was given immunity and we never heard another word about him or from him. Where is Woodward and Bernstein? – Doug R.**

Good question, Doug. I’ve had friends ask me the same thing.

And your question raises even more: How did a whole bunch of Clinton cronies – not just Pagliano – get such “polite” treatment from the FBI? Why were they allowed to keep their computers? Why weren’t they questioned under oath? Why did James Comey begin writing up his final report clearing Hillary Clinton weeks before the FBI spoke to her? (In his book, “A Higher Authority,” Comey explains it this way: “Prosecutors routinely begin drafting indictments before an investigation is finished if it looks likely to end up there, and competent ones also begin thinking how to end investigations that seem likely to end without charges.”)

Attorney General Barr needs to get to the bottom of all of this. One more point: When a journalist is given information by an anonymous source, it’s a story if the information is true. But it could be an even bigger story if it’s NOT true.

Why did the source pass along false information? What are his or her motives? The journalists who got collusion wrong for the past two years might want to try to make up for their past deeds by looking into the question you raised – and the other ones too.

**Despite her protests to the contrary, I believe that Michelle Obama will be the Democrat 2020 nominee because none of the announced candidates will win the nomination prior to the convention and by that time , their hard left turn will make Michelle a compelling choice due to her “perceived moderation,” something her book and President Obama’s recent moderate statements will reinforce, not to mention she checks off the two critical boxes on race and gender and the former president would ensure a huge turnout in November 2020. Why hasn’t this possibility been more discussed by conservative pundits? – Michael F.**

Because they and I don’t think it’s going to happen. And for good reason. As the Democrats move from primary to primary, laggards will drop out. Before long there’ll be a relatively few survivors. One of them will win the nomination – unless it goes to a brokered convention. I don’t see Mrs. Obama surfacing in either scenario. If I’m wrong, I’ll give you a great big mea culpa apology, Michael.

**A lot has been made on the point that Mueller did not exonerate President Trump. Isn’t it on him to prove the charges of conspiracy and obstruction? Without proof, isn’t there essentially no conspiracy or obstruction. – Kip V.**

Regarding conspiracy, Mueller concluded there was no evidence to support such a charge. On obstruction, you could argue that as a prosecutor he should have either said, “He obstructed justice even if we can’t, as per DOJ rules, indict him” – or he should have said, “There’s not evidence to support that charge either.” Instead he waffled and said he wasn’t exonerating the president. But as the Report makes clear, President Trump tried very hard to obstruct the investigation. The only reason he didn’t succeed is because his people refused to follow his orders. See [John Daly’s excellent column](#) on this on this website.

**Outside of my religious background, I believe the 20th century**

**to be one of the most intriguing, historical, periods of mankind. If you could pick five historical decades to work as a journalist, outside of the years you did write, what decades of mankind would that be? Both BC and AD timeframes are accepted. – Tim H.**

Interesting question.

Much of the first century AD would top the list. I'd go back to earlier Roman times but if I reported what was going on one of the ruling despots would put ME on the cross. Let's move closer to home. 1776 would be a good time to work as a journalist. The 1860s because of the Civil War. The 1920s because of how they roared ... leading up to the Great Depression in 1929. The 1940s provided lots for a journalist and finally the 1960s, but I was around to cover part of that decade. That's six. You made me think.

**As a kid, I remember my parents thinking that the "What's the frequency, Kenneth?" incident with Dan Rather was a hoax, and that he (and possibly CBS News) had made it up as a publicity stunt. I know that it was proven years later to be legit, but I'm curious as to whether any of Rather's colleagues at CBS News (including you) were ever skeptical of his account. – John D.**

Lots of my colleagues were skeptical. No one thought CBS News was in on it, but yes, more than a few wondered what really happened. There were theories – none of them good for Dan. I won't reveal what they were because none panned out. As you say, John, the crazy story turned out to be true.

**Sir Bernard– I haven't asked a question in weeks, so I am hoping you will indulge me with these multi questions. Although I realize you have to be somewhere by mid-December, would you be so kind to share with your new, ever-growing and very interested audience the following:**

**1) Any info regarding your children?**

- 2) What you do for fun?
- 3) Where, other than the U.S., would you consider living and why?
- 4) What was your most memorable interview and why?
- 5) If you could have an honest conversation with any living person, who might that be?
- 6) Do you have an opinion as to why Mark Levin rants and raves on his radio show, but presents a harmonious demeanor on his TV show?

–Matthew Q.

1. No. Family stuff is private.
2. I used to play pick up basketball until I decided I don't like chasing guys much younger than me all over the court on Sunday morning. Now, I play AT golf. I'm a beginner. And it's hard. Real hard.
3. In Fantasy Land, I'd say Australia. They speak English. Nice people. A lot like America used to be. But it won't happen.
4. I interviewed the head of the Russian Olympic Committee ahead of the Sochi Winter Games for Real Sports on HBO. He was a friend of Putin's. Let's just say I'm lucky I made it out alive. I'd also put my interview with Paul McCartney on a memorable list. We hit it off.
5. I'd say Putin, but it wouldn't be an honest conversation. Same with Mr. Trump. I've interviewed Alan Dershowitz and would like to do it again. THAT would be an honest conversation.
6. I've thought about that too. Show Biz, Matthew. Pure Show Biz. Though, to be fair, he is a conservative ideologue and I trust really believes what he's yelling about. But ... That schtick wouldn't work on TV – not in the present format where he interviews guests. I did see a Levin TV show recently where he had no guests, and there was a little of the ranting style of his radio show.

**Hello Mr. Goldberg: What is your opinion of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg as a judge? As a Supreme Court Justice? As a person? Is she rightly lionized by the left? I know that she was friendly with the late Justice Scalia...that must have been interesting. Best Regards–The Emperor**

She's an outspoken liberal woman. That's why she's lionized by the left. I know nothing about her as a person off the bench.

**When are you going to writing your next book. Surely your taking good notes on what's going on right now! How about, "an Unslobbering Love Affair with Trump!! – Robert P.**

I made a vow: NO MORE BOOKS. I made it after my second book and violated the pledge 3 times. But now I'm serious. It's too lonely, too time-consuming and hawking the book on a million radio shows is torture. No more. This time for real.

*(Editor's note: The below question was shortened due to length and some personal details):*

**Bernie: What is your opinion of Mark Levin's Fox show "Life, Liberty and Levin"? I usually try to tune in because he seems to have a unique ability to draw information out of a broad range of interesting people, making him more or less a male Barbara Walters.**

Last week I was shocked when I tuned in to see Levin interviewing Mike Lindell, the ubiquitous "My Pillow" guy. I was vaguely aware that Lindell had a past history of cocaine abuse and at some point he cleaned up his act, but until Levin's show I didn't know the details of his sordid history. With a big smile on his face, Lindell bragged that he had been a "functioning" crack addict for over 40 years, and he was high as a kite when he started his pillow business. Things got so bad that at one point his drug dealers cut him off. He went on to claim that a few years ago he found Jesus and now he sells pillows and religion all mixed up together. As a practicing physician with over 40 years of experience, I can

absolutely guarantee you that there is no such thing as a “functioning addict”. When someone abuses alcohol they usually only hurt themselves, their families and perhaps friends and some co-workers, but it usually doesn’t have any broader effects on society. For people who abuse drugs like cocaine, heroin or methamphetamine, the picture is much different. Unlike alcohol, the substances they abuse are illegal and are moved into this country by drug lords like the notorious El Chapo Guzman, who was directly responsible for killing thousands of people and indirectly responsible for the death of hundreds of thousands of people. When you connect the dots, it is clear that by supporting people like El Chapo for 40 years, Lindell is indirectly responsible for the deaths of countless people throughout the US, Mexico and many other countries around the world. Levin seemed oblivious to these obvious facts and he seemed to be fascinated by this obvious psychopathic con man. Do you think Mark Levin owes his viewers and the general public an apology for showcasing this psychopathic clown? – William W.

WOW! You don’t want to give a guy credit for turning his life around? Really? I think the interview was legitimate, William. I defer to your medical knowledge, but if someone finds a way to get off drugs, that’s a good thing. I don’t have a problem with an interview that shares that story. And if you connect the dots as you suggest then anyone who’s ever lit up a joint is also responsible for the deaths of “countless people.” Sorry, William, while I get your point, I’m just not on the same page.

Hi Bernie, Long time fan. I want to know your opinion on our western values and if you see a bright future or a dead end. Keep us educated. – Evelyn

That’s a pretty big question, Evelyn – the future of Western values and I assume Western Civilization? I have hope. I’m guessing our values will survive. But ... I think the Left in this country – if they had free reign – would do a lot of harm

to our values and our civilization. It's not crazy to think the hard Left would like to criminalize speech they don't like, to use just one example. We already know that they want to confiscate wealth from those who have it and spread it around to those who don't. Sooner or later a so-called progressive will win the White House. Then we'll have an answer to your question about western values.

**Dear Bernie, First off, I just want to say that I love your column! My question regards Mayor Pete. Of all the democratic presidential candidates, he impresses me the most. I want to make it clear that I have absolutely nothing against gay people, but if Mayor Pete was elected president, do you think his sexual persuasion would prevent him from dealing effectively with foreign leaders from Russia, China or Saudi Arabia and perhaps others? – Fred L.**

Donald Trump is straight. You think he has trouble dealing effectively with foreign leaders?

If the mayor from a small city in Indiana can get all the way to the Oval Office, then he's smart enough to know how to deal with foreign leaders who may have discriminatory tendencies. But the fact that he's gay shouldn't influence whether the American people think he's capable of being president. Vote for him because of his policies, or vote against him for the same reason. Not whether foreign leaders will accept him. We can't let them influence decisions that are ours alone. Thanks for the question, Fred, and the kind words about my columns.

**Bernie... What are your thoughts on the proliferation of social media use in the world of sports today? Does it not seem that athletes are more worried at winning Twitter than their game of choice? We're seeing more and more of athletes checking devices while games are in progress. New Arizona Cardinals Head Coach Kliff Kingsbury is going as far as implementing designated 'phone times' during practices and meetings. Make**

**some sense of this!! – Greg W.**

Remember, Greg, these athletes are young guys, some aren't even 20 yet. And despite their athletic talent which makes them different, they're like other people their age who are on social media all the time and who care what somebody tweeted. To me, it's all too much, but as I say, they're no different from young guys (and women) who aren't athletes.

**Hi Bernie, I'm just curious of your take on what's driving supposedly intelligent democratic leaders to take on truly insane positions these days. My favorite new one is Bill de Blasio stating that he wants to do away with "traditional glass and steel skyscrapers." Is it just me, or are grade school kids starting to make more sense than leftist politicians? – Keith M.**

It is NOT just you, Keith. It's me too. And a lot of others. The Left has gone nuts. That may be a bit glib, but it explains a lot.

**I've heard many on the left refer to how stupid they believe that Ronald Reagan was. One point they made is that Ronald Reagan said that pollution came from trees. However nobody gives me the context on which he made this remark. Could you please clarify this for me? Always a pleasure – The Emperor**

I got this very long answer from NASA and in case you're wondering. I don't understand any of it. **Warning to everyone other than The Emperor: The following may put you to sleep.**

In 1981, President Ronald Reagan [claimed](#) that trees produce more air pollution than automobiles, fueling a spate of jokes about ["killer trees."](#) He was mostly wrong, but not completely.

It is true that forests emit [volatile organic compounds](#) and reactive hydrocarbons such as [isoprene](#), a chemical that contributes to air pollution. Although isoprene is harmless by itself, the gas reacts with other substances in the atmosphere

to form certain types of fine [aerosols](#) and [ground-level ozone](#). (Ozone near the ground causes health problems, damages crops, and contributes to climate change. In the [stratosphere](#), it is beneficial because it prevents harmful ultraviolet rays from reaching Earth's surface.)

What Reagan neglected to indicate is that unhealthy levels of ozone wouldn't form without [nitrogen oxides \(NO<sub>x</sub>\)](#), pollutants emitted when gasoline and coal are burned," explained [Bryan Duncan](#), an atmospheric scientist at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center and the deputy project scientist for the [Aura satellite](#). Since sunlight is ubiquitous and forests emit large quantities of volatile organics in the summer, it is the amount of nitrogen oxide that determines whether ozone forms over cities on hot summer days. That NO<sub>x</sub> is most often supplied by vehicles.

In the 1970s and 80s, the United States spent billions trying to limit hydrocarbon emissions, but such efforts had little impact on ground-level ozone because forests were providing plenty of natural hydrocarbons. [Research](#) conducted by [William Chameides](#) of Georgia Tech underscored the futility of trying to limit hydrocarbons while ignoring nitrogen oxides.

"Hydrocarbons from forests are so common and widespread in the eastern U.S. that their presence simply overwhelms anything happening with anthropogenic hydrocarbons," Duncan said. "The only realistic way to try to limit ozone formation is to do something about nitrogen oxides, which is [what has been done](#) in the U.S. over the last several decades. As a result, surface ozone [has declined](#). Not to mention that forests are a natural and crucial part of the environment. Cutting down trees just doesn't make any sense."

While satellites cannot measure isoprene emissions from forests directly, they can measure [formaldehyde](#) (HCHO), a gas that forms as a result of oxidizing isoprene emissions and as a byproduct of fires. The map above, based on data collected

by the [Ozone Monitoring Instrument](#) (OMI) on the Aura satellite, shows the global distribution of formaldehyde in September 2013.

The highest concentrations of formaldehyde were present over the Amazon rainforest, in southeastern Africa, and in the southeastern United States. While isoprene from forests was the primary source of the formaldehyde in these areas, observations from the [Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer](#) (MODIS) show that fires, most likely crop burning, contributed to the high levels in these areas as well.

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Thanks, everyone! You can send me questions for next week **using the form below!** You can also read previous Q&A sessions by [clicking here](#).

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**Bernie's Q&A: Rather,**

# Schultz, Stengel, The Sopranos, “Fake News”, Palestine, Abortion and More (4/19)

Welcome to this week's **Premium Q&A** session for *Premium Interactive* members. I appreciate you all signing up and joining me. Thank you.

Let's get to your questions (and my answers):

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Really enjoy the weekly Q&A. I have been thinking a lot about the potential impact if H Schultz runs in 2020 as an independent. While it is very unlikely he could garner a majority of the electoral college votes, I have read nothing about the possibility of his winning a few states and thereby depriving the two major party candidates of an electoral college majority. Do you think this could occur, what states are the best targets, and if this were to occur any predictions as to how Speaker Pelosi would deal with the resulting circus that would then take place in the House and the MSM? – Michael F.

I don't believe Howard Schultz will run, Michael. So I think the rest is moot. But ...

It's clear that if he does, Donald Trump almost certainly will win re-election. Schultz would split the Democratic vote opening the door to a Trump second term. I don't believe his candidacy will deprive either major party candidate of the electoral votes they need to win. As you say, “very unlikely.” Schultz believes in many things, high on the list is that Donald Trump needs to go. He, Schultz, is a smart man

and can figure out that he'd be the spoiler. People will convince him not to run. Donald Trump should pray that he does.

**Have you read Ilan Pappé's book "The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine?" It seems to me that until the well documented actions of the Israelis are addressed that there will be no peace in the Middle East. – Thomas W.**

I have not read the book, but it seems to me that until the Palestinians decide they love their children more than they hate the Israelis there also will be no peace. We can argue the pros and cons of Israeli settlements in the West Bank. But let's not forget the Israelis have already tried "land for peace." They gave back every inch of Gaza and got, not peace, but rockets on a daily basis. The Palestinians a while back had a chance to get 95 percent of what they claim to want, and turned the deal down. As the great Israeli diplomat Abba Eban once said: "The Arabs never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity."

**I have been a fan for many years. I find you to be a consistent and rational source w/ about how the national media operates. W/ regard to FOX News Channel I wonder if you would agree w/ this. While I don't watch FNC opinion programming I understand why it is there (same w/ MSNBC and CNN). But I find that the 'news' division inside FNC to be the most balanced of the national broadcast media. Chris Wallace, Shepard Smith, Bret Baier, and many of the correspondents do a reasonably good job of covering both sides of the news. Far better than any other national organization. But since both 'news' and 'opinion' programming are rolled up under one brand they get confused. What isn't confusing – rather blatant – would be MSNBC and Andrea Mitchell. She has/had a daytime opinion program and then would report in the evening for NBC News as their Chief Foreign Affairs Correspondent which breaks the 'golden rule' for a news organization and any journalist. This is where a set of enforceable rules would be handy. W/ regard**

to FNC maybe they could create another channel (think FBC) called FNC News for their news division and keep their opinion shows on FNC. It could create a revenue opportunity while helping the national media get back on track. – Chuck

I'm with you, Chuck. In terms of straight news reporting, Fox is way ahead of CNN and MSNBC. I also agree that when a hard news reporter has an opinion show then covers foreign affairs for the network it creates problems. We shouldn't know how a hard news reporter feels about any subject she's covering. You're also correct when you say news and opinion get rolled under one brand – and cause confusion. As for creating a news channel and a separate opinion channel: First, FNC would have to do opinion all day long (which some people think already happens) – and then do news all day long on a separate channel. The former would be torture (for me) and the latter wouldn't be interesting enough for a mass audience. Interesting thought, though.

I'm surprised and a bit dismayed to read your words in the last Q&A to the effect that fake “made up” news is a rarity in media journalism today. For the past two and half years we've endured blatantly false news reporting nearly every day by the likes of CNN and others promulgating a preposterous “Trump is Russia” narrative based on a discredited dossier. We saw similar bad faith media reporting on Judge Kavanaugh as possible college serial rapist allowing Michael Avenatti a platform for his clients' ludicrous accusations. So please tell me what difference there is in the media's making up its own false news stories or reporting false news stories—via other sources—such as the FBI leak of the Steele Dossier? – Phillip R.

Fair enough, Phillip. Legitimate question.

Donald Trump has said, repeatedly, that journalists “make up” sources and that this constitutes “fake news.” If they did make up sources, he'd be right. But except for the very rare

cases, they don't. Getting things wrong is not "fake news." I've said before that journalists have made mistakes and they seem to go in one direction – the anti-Trump direction, and that this constitutes bias. Bias, while not a good thing, is not "fake news." If the media believe sources that aren't telling the truth, the villain first, is the source with an ax to grind and second, the journalist who should have been more skeptical. If you define "fake news" as putting out stories based on speculation that turns out not to be true, Ok, then it's fake news. That's not my definition and more importantly, it's not really Donald Trump's definition. Again, he has repeatedly said that reporters just make stuff up. Not true. That said, you make good points about the constant drumbeat of negative stories about the Donald Trump and Russia. That tells me that too many journalists have it in for this president. But that's just not the same as concocting sources out of nothing.

**Hello Mr. Goldberg: In your book "100 People Who Are Screwing Up America" you have a chapter on Al Franken. You mentioned that Casey Stengel used to line up his players and talk nonsense to them and "he wasn't joking." I'm not much of a sports fan, so I have to ask: what kind of gibberish would Casey Stengel spout at the players, and why did he do it if he wasn't joking? Was this some kind of head game he was playing? What would be the purpose? And while I'm at it, in "A Slobbering Love Affair" I recall that there were some documents from Barack Obama's college years that you mentioned were being held under wraps, and you were wondering what is in them. Could you please elaborate? Which documents were you specifically referring to? What do you think would be revealed? Finally, why can't they be revealed? Mr. Obama is a public figure, so such information (along with Donald Trump's tax returns) SHOULD be made public, shouldn't they? What's the holdup? Best Regards –The Emperor**

There's a lot in your question(s), Emperor and I have to be

someplace by mid-December, but I'll give it a try.

Casey Stengel would go on and on when chatting with reporters, bouncing from one subject to the next without so much as a breath in between. He was a character. At spring training one year he told his players to line up in alphabetical order – according to height. He must be on Google someplace. You have to listen to him to truly understand how “entertaining” he was.

As for Mr. Obama's records: They're not public records, they were college records. His grades, his term papers, anything he might have put on paper that would give us a clue to his thinking then – and maybe during his presidency.

The holdup is that he's never given Columbia (or any of the other colleges he attended) permission to release whatever they have. And since it's all private, the public has no legal right to know what's there. Why hasn't he released his college info? That's what's so intriguing.

**It seems to me, as the news media becomes more and more of an entertainment product, that there's an unprecedented amount of importance placed on the youth and looks of news commentators. Of course, it has long been an advantage in television journalism to be good looking (news organizations and producers strive for an attractive news presentation). But in recent years and especially on cable news (most noticeably on Fox), I feel as if it has become somewhat of an overriding factor on the opinion side – overriding in the sense that if someone has the “right look”, they are not necessarily expected to be able to put forth serious or informed commentary, even when seated at discussion tables alongside individuals who can and do.**

**Do you feel that today's cable news audiences for the most part even notice this type of thing, or feel insulted by it? Or do you think they just appreciate the “eye candy,” as long**

**as that person is saying the stuff they want to hear? – Andrew D.**

There's plenty of eye candy on cable, most notably at Fox, as you say. But a lot of those attractive people are also pretty smart. Not all, but more than you'd think. Let's not assume that a beautiful woman can't also be a very smart woman. Here's what's not a good thing, especially for women: If you're a good journalist, but not especially attractive, you're going to have a tough time getting an on-air job at places like Fox. That's troubling. But the audience isn't complaining – especially the guys watching the women show leg on Fox shows. They don't call it Infotainment for nothing, Andrew.

**By any chance have you ever watched the *Big Interview with Dan Rather*? It's on AXS TV. Dan has some really interesting guests, which is why i've watched it a few times, but I'm very surprised by how bad of an interviewer he is. The questions are surprisingly bad and he seems quite unprepared. I don't recall what kind of interviewer he was when he was with CBS News. Was he generally good back then? – Beverly**

I have watched the show, Beverly, and when the guests are interesting I like it. Regarding Dan: He's not out to grill his guests on a show like this. He's there to be a pal and have a conversation with them. I've long believed that the most important single factor that makes for a good interview ... is the person being interviewed. If he or she is interesting and engaging, the interview will be a success. Yes, the interviewer can screw things up by not asking good questions or not listening and missing a needed follow up question. But for The Big Interview, Dan is fine. As far as how he did at CBS News, he did good work. The problem with Dan – and I've said this before – is that he was either unwilling or unable to take serious criticism seriously.

**Years ago I remember you talking to O'Reilly on Fox about The**

**Sopranos. You had some pretty deep thoughts on the show, and you were clearly a fan. Are there any current television series, or series since then, that you really enjoy and would perhaps place in the same league? – Jeff P.**

My favorite show is Homeland on Showtime. I'm a HUGE fan! I watch Billions on Showtime but it's not in the same league as the Sopranos or Homeland. I also watch Curb Your Enthusiasm on HBO – and each week root for Larry David to get hit by a bus. Not in real life, of course. It's just that he's so annoying in that role – which I suspect is not that much different from Larry David in real life. I watch almost nothing on network TV – except big sporting events and every now and then Shark Tank. I recently watched the 6 part series The Bodyguard on Netflix and thought it was pretty good – but not great.

**Mr. G., In view of the vitriol being tossed back and forth, between AOC and her ilk, and Mr. Trump, do you think we'll ever see real civility in politics ever again? – Terry & Kathi**

That's the \$64 million dollar question. My gut answer is ... no. Things have gotten so bad, so uncivil, that I see no path back to reasoned, decent disagreement. All I see is Resistance. I used to think that a national tragedy would bring us together. 9/11 did. For about 10 minutes then it was back to what passes for "normal." Maybe if a charismatic politician comes along who shows "the other side" respect and calls on his team to also show respect ... maybe then things would change. But I must sound like Pollyanna saying that. I don't see that person on the horizon. I'm pessimistic, Terry and Kathi.

**With very few journalists such as yourself, it's hard to biased journalists to really make a name for themselves anymore. They just parrot each other. Will it ever become fashionable again to take a more clear and honest approach to journalism? Unbiased! – Paul M.**

For quite a while now, journalism in America has lost the trust and confidence of the American people. And for good reason. As long as bias sells, things won't change. And make no mistake, it does sell. News organizations – and not just cable TV – have made a business decision: give the audience what it wants. Don't challenge its biases. Instead, validate what the viewers already believe, what they already think about Donald Trump or the Democrats. As long as that model continues to bring in money, things won't change. The viewer or the reader is an indicted co-conspirator as far as I'm concerned. They're not asking for change. They like it when CNN, MSNBC, Fox, The NY Times, et al give them what they want. That said, there's some good journalism going on. But too much slanted journalism .

**After the David Shaw series in the L.A. Times detailing an abortion-rights bias in the newsrooms, I thought that the media would look at how it reports on these stories and stop giving it a slant. That was 29 years ago. Do you feel that reporting on abortion has changed for the better? – Alex**

I once jokingly suggested that we need affirmative action in America's newsrooms for a minority group vastly under-represented in the world of journalism. That minority was conservative journalists. After a while, I stopped joking about it and started pitching it for real. I don't want conservative journalists to bring their opinions and biases into the newsroom – any more than I want liberal journalists to bring their opinions and biases into the newsroom. But with so few conservatives in journalism, abortion coverage – to use the example you mention – is seen through a liberal, pro-abortion rights prism. With more conservatives we'd have a different *perspective* injected into the conversation. A conservative might see how a story on "late term" abortion is being discussed in the newsroom and chime in with a different position. I don't follow abortion coverage closely enough to answer your question beyond what I've already suggested, but

I'm pretty sure some diversity of opinion in the newsroom would make abortion coverage – and a lot more – a lot better.

**Have you read Michael Luo's article "The Urgent Quest for Slower, Better News"? What is your take on Slow Media (e.g. Delayed Gratification, Tortoise Media) and its pros and cons? – John M.**

Sorry, John, I know nothing about this.

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## **Bernie's Q&A: Bongino, Sharpton, Hitchens, Logan, and Much More (4/12)**

Welcome to this week's **Premium Q&A** session for *Premium Interactive* members. I appreciate you all signing up and

joining me. Thank you.

Let's get to your questions (and my answers):

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**Dan Bongino wrote an excellent book called SPYGATE where he effectively outlined ALL the players and the timeline of events plus the interconnections of the coverup regarding the REAL Collusion. He has written a follow-up titled EXONERATED which deals with the plot to "take down" President Trump due out in November. YOUR thoughts if you read SPYGATE and your analysis of Mr. Bongino. Thank you. – Geoff**

I have not read the book and Bongino comes off – to me – as a hyper partisan. I tune out when people like that are on TV. If Donald Trump dropped a nuclear bomb on Cleveland, Bongino would find an excuse to defend the president. At least that's how I see him. And, of course, he's hardly alone when it comes to Fox contributors defending Trump no matter what. And yes, CNN and MSNBC contributors bash the president – no matter what.

**My guess, based on its enormous success and groundbreaking importance, is that *Bias* is the book you're most proud of as an author (pls correct me if I'm wrong). Which of your books are you second proudest of? – Andrew D.**

You're right Andrew and, yes, because it broke ground and caused such a furor. I liked *A Slobbering Love Affair* second, I guess, because it documented the embarrassing love affair the so-called mainstream media had with Barack Obama. I think the title captured what the book was about.

**Is there any polling or statistical data to support the labeling of MAGA hats wearers and Trump rally attendees as anti-semites and neo-nazis? As a Jewish American, do I have more to fear from the typical Trump supporter or typical left leaning college student? Which group is more likely to support**

**violence against those with whom they disagree? – Michael F.**

There is no polling data that I know of that would show that people who wear MAGA hats and people who attend Trump rallies are anti-Semites and/or neo-Nazis. Are there some Jew haters on the right? Sure. But there are a lot on the left these days – especially on college campuses. For the record, you can be anti Israel without being anti Jewish. But more than a few on the anti Israel left, I suspect, aren't fans of Jews in general. As for violence, it's the hard left on campus that tries to shut down speech they don't like – often using violence to achieve that goal.

**Bernie: Don't you suspect that many traditional Democrats won't have a dog in this race when it comes to challenging Trump? You and I grew up in the same era. I grew up in Minnesota in the era of Hubert Humphrey, Fritz Mondale, and similar centralists. Humphrey was even one of my professors at Macalester College. Coming from such a liberal institution, I was once a typical Democrat. Once I experienced a bit of life I drifted leftward and have keep moving in that direction for the past 40 years. Virtually all the current Democratic candidates are avowed Socialists or worse. Some claim this is necessary to win the primary and perhaps that's true, but most Democrats I know are more typical centralists. Joe Biden is the only traditional Democratic candidate and if he enters the race he will get burned at the stake by his own party. What does all of this mean? I would say four more years for Trump! – William W.**

First, William, I think you meant to say that you've been drifting rightward, not leftward. But I get the gist of your question.

The Democratic Party has moved far left and that's where the energy is. It's not the same party that we grew up with. So if the election is about their hard left policies ... Trump can win. But if the election is about Trump's character, his

behavior, his pettiness, etc ... then I think even a lefty would have a chance to beat him. The progressives want no part of Joe Biden, you're right about that. But if the ten thousand or so progressive candidates split the primary vote, Biden can sneak in and win the nomination. And he's got the best chance of beating the president. The progressives won't like it if Biden gets the nomination but they so want to defeat this president that they won't sit home on Election Day. As always, I could be wrong; 2020 is a long way down the road.

**Every time the subject of health care arises, the Left (along with the 'MSM') say that "Health Care is a Right." When this was the mantra during the Clinton era, we did not have FOX, or any other conservative tv station, and so the public never learned that the Hillary Plan would have ELIMINATED our rights to purchase care which the plan denied. (As one of 17 board members of the AAPS when we sued the Clinton Health Care Task Force, I can guarantee that this is a fact.) So much for our "Right" to Health Care or our natural rights to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. Would you agree to make that utter hypocrisy clear to the public at the appropriate time? - Joe S.**

Health care is a major concern of enough Americans, Joe, to sway the election. The Republicans better have a plan if they want to repeal Obamacare. Beyond that, you're right ... they need to explain for example what Medicare for all really means; that the federal government will be making a lot of your medical decisions. So far, the GOP has totally screwed up the healthcare debate. That's a big reason the Democrats took over the House in the last midterms. Republicans are vulnerable on this issue. Stay tuned.

**In my humble opinion, the greatest sporting event of the 20th century was the US Hockey Team at Lake Placid. After I saw it on HBO, I purchased several DVD's to give to friends. It wasn't until a few years later that I noticed you wrote that documentary (Do You Believe in Miracles?). I consider it one**

of the best sports documentaries I have ever seen. Just curious; was this story of personal interest to you and is there anything interesting to report during production? I was surprised how friendly and open the Russians were in the interviews. – Tim H.

My best line in that documentary, Tim, was: **The only thing placid that day ... was the lake.**

What sticks with me about that documentary is that even though you know how it ends, that the American kids beat the mighty Russians ... you'll have tears in your eyes watching it. That's how moving it was – even for me, the guy who wrote it.

Here's a behind-the-scenes story never told before now: I wanted to end the documentary – which began with how terrible the 1970s were; long gas lines, high interest rates, etc – with this line: **February 22, 1980, the day the 1970s finally ended.**

The producer wanted to end the documentary with interviews from some of the key players. It was his show so he got his way.

I'm still annoyed about that. (A little, anyway.)

**Bernie, Are we not clearly in Bizarro World when every Democratic 'Candidate' finds it necessary to bow at the alter of Al Sharpton, let alone endorse and commit to the notion of reparations . Do they all have no shame?? – Ronald M.**

Yes, we are in Bizarro World and they have no shame.

It's pathetic, but such is the Democratic Party: Offend "Reverend Al" and you have problems with the black vote.

I'm going to stop writing now because I'm getting ill thinking about it.

**Bernie, I have always considered myself a libertarian(from**

Latin: libertas meaning freedom). I really think most people don't want anyone telling them what to do or how to run their lives. Yet both parties seem to be absolutely trying to run our lives (what to do with our money, who with and how to have sex, what we can say or think, etc.) I think this because my liberal friends and conservative friends don't seem to like my libertarian philosophy. They seem to think I don't stand for anything. Actually I do. I stand for their freedom and mine. Your thoughts? – Doug R.

I'm with you, Doug. I'm a conservative in that I want a small government, low taxes, and I want the government to be tough on terrorists and other enemies. But I want the government out of our personal lives as much as possible. Your friends are wrong. You stand for personal freedom. If they don't get it, that's on them. Stay cool.

Regarding your [column this week](#) about partisan hate, pointing out the problem is the easy part. How do we fix it? I don't think Trump dropping dead is realistic. And, despite your obvious disgust with Trump claiming that fake news is an enemy of the people, I tend to agree with him. Trump has never said all news is fake. It is the news that is made up, comes from anonymous 'sources' that prove to be wrong and other lies they deliberately tell. I think this is an enemy of the people. Journalists (see Lara Logan) need to go back to being reporters and not advocates. Your thoughts? – Dennis C.

Dennis, you and I will never see eye to eye, I'm afraid. Trump says reporters make stuff up, they concoct sources. They don't. Maybe a tiny fraction of 1 percent of journalists have done stuff like that. But that's the extent of it. He once told Leslie Stahl that he continually bashes the media so people won't believe what they report about him. Fake news to Donald Trump is news he doesn't like. Do some journalists from time to time make mistakes? Yes. Do the mistakes tend to go in one direction – the anti-Trump direction? Yes. Does this constitute bias? Yes. So we agree

that too many journalists are out to get the president and that that's not a good thing. But fake news meaning made up news? Sorry. No.

You favorably quote Lara Logan. Do you know that I said what she's saying 23 years ago in the Wall Street Journal and then again in 2001 in *Bias*. I like Lara, but let's be clear: She's taking on the media *after* she was let go by CBS News. I wrote the op-ed while I *still* was a correspondent at CBS News. Big difference, Dennis. If you agree with her, you agree more than you know, with me.

**What is your opinion of Rachel Corrie? Some hold her up as a heroine who fought for the rights of the Palestinians under siege against an enemy with superior artillery. Others say that she was a naive tool exploited by the PLO at best, and a terrorist sympathizer at worst. Also, in your opinion, what do you think of her parents and the publicity that they have garnered, and why do you think Rachel Corrie decided to fight with the jihadists in the first place? Best Regards –The Emperor**

All I know nothing about her is what I read in the papers at the time of her death. I don't want to attribute motives to her; that would be unfair. But an American who goes to the Middle East to side with the Palestinians during one of their frequent uprisings is not someone I'd like to hang out with. Sorry, but that's all I can offer.

**I notice a lot of fox news contributors (as well as other cable news outlets) are ex politicians, military, intelligence, and etc. How much are they paid? – Bill E.**

Varies. Some who are on only occasionally probably work for free. Maybe they get to plug a book in return for their appearance. But for regulars – on at least once a week – and exclusive – can't work for CNN or MSNBC – the pay range is quite wide: maybe 50k a year on the low side; considerably

higher for others who are in demand, money into six figures.

**What's your opinion of the late Christopher Hitchens? What did you agree with him about and what did you disagree with? Best Regards – The Emperor**

Very smart guy. But since I never met him, can't really say. He wrote an interesting book about faith; he was an atheist.

**While the editorial board at the NY Times has its share of bias issues, one of the most concerning stories I've seen is around [Project Feels](#). It seems the NY Times is making premium ad pricing around how a story makes the reader "feel". The NYT may be saying this is a limited scope project for only a small group of advertising dollars, but I'm worried if this is as successful as they project it could be. The rabbit hole would then seem destined to be littered with future efforts to shape a new story's message to fit one of the "feelings" that sell the best. We've gone from reporting the news, to "if it bleeds, it leads" to this, which seems to be evolution in reverse. Mr. Goldberg, is this just a lot of unnecessary worry on my part? Thank you for your column and for your brilliant books. – Steve**

First, thanks for the kind words, Steve. They are greatly appreciated.

**As for Project Feels, here's what the Times says: "To be clear: this is an advertising project and was done without coordination with the newsroom; its findings will never impact our news report or other editorial decisions."**

So, if it's strictly about advertising placement, I'm OK with it. But ... if the Times goes down the road you worry about, then I'll be with you. If the paper believes it can make more money running certain kinds of stories that make readers "feel" a certain way, that'll be very, very bad. The Times says don't worry, it won't happen. So let's see how it plays out.

Can you name two or three current cable-news commentators (not necessarily hosts) who you believe have resisted the pressures of political tribalism and sycophantism, and have provided fair, honest, and reasonable commentary in the era of Trump? – John D.

Alan Dershowitz, Brit Hume, Guy Benson.

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Thanks, everyone! You can send me questions for next week **using the form below!** You can also read previous Q&A sessions by [clicking here](#).

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## **Bernie's Q&A: Brit Hume, Donna Brazile, Joseph McCarthy, and AC/DC? (4/5)**

Welcome to this week's **Premium Q&A** session for *Premium Interactive* members. I appreciate you all signing up and joining me. Thank you.

Let's get to your questions (and my answers):

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**I am a big fan of Brit Hume and find his commentaries on Fox to be very insightful, articulate and straightforward without any discernible bias. What has your experience been with Brit in both your personal and professional interaction with him? – Ken J.**

I've had no professional or social dealings with Brit, except once in the Green Room at Fox in Washington – and then it was just a friendly hello. I'm a huge fan of Brit Hume. Huge! He's everything a journalist should be. Too bad there aren't more like him.

**As a former DoJ supervisory criminal investigator, I am curious as to your thoughts, why Special Counsel Mueller would utilize attorneys/investigators who have credibility issues, at a minimum the appearance of a conflict...while conducting such a sensitive and high profile criminal investigation? I am hopeful that General Barr will restore some of the luster to DoJ's once respectable reputation. If I may, I highly recommend to your readers, *Licensed to Lie: Exposing Corruption in the Department of Justice*. – Matthew Q.**

I'm with you Matthew. Even if the Mueller associates were 100 percent fair and honest and impartial, the appearance of bias is important too. I think he made a mistake by choosing so many Democrats. You'd think a smart guy like Mueller would have thought about this. Maybe he did and just didn't care.

*(Editor's Note: John Daly wrote about this topic – partly in response to this question – in his [column this week](#)).*

**Bernie, It seems to me, that the MSM is, contrary to their wishes, hopes, dreams and certainly conscious intentions, actually are one of, if not the, main reason Trump was so high in the polls during the primary and eventually beat Hillary.**

**They gave him free publicity to the point he was a runaway train and they couldn't look away. Now, they are doing to some level, the same thing with AOC. They, themselves are creating this persona. Thoughts? – James G.**

The MSM certainly gave Donald Trump free air time – and allowed him to say things that weren't true but never bothered to set the record straight. Fox simply covered his rallies as live events. He could say anything and they just put it on TV. Enough people saw *that* Donald Trump and figured he's different, he's not a politician, he's brash, etc ... and said "I'm going to give him a shot." Will they do that twice? As for AOC, the media – right and left – can't turn away. She's the shiny object they're focused on. But airtime doesn't guarantee success. The more you're on the more people know about you – the good and the bad. Yes, airtime worked for Trump the first time around. That doesn't mean it works for everybody. It doesn't even mean it'll work for Donald Trump if he decides to run for reelection.

**Mr. Goldberg: I'd understand it if you want to pass on answering my question because it's not about bias or journalism on the national level. What's your opinion on local television newscasts' and their journalistic quality. Not to answer my own question, but the word that comes to mind when I watch local news is: "insipid." – Jim P**

There are exceptions ... there are some local news outfits that do good work ... but when I tune in around the country the philosophy seems to be, "If it bleeds, it leads." Insuper's not a bad word. But as I say, some local reporting is very good. Too much is a police blotter – one crime story after another.

**My pick for Time's Person of the Year is "The Hypocrite"! Whether in religion (Pick a religion. Any religion.), politics (Pick a party. Any party.), or just regular folks. Never have I seen anything like this. Never. Your thoughts? Aloha – Mike**

Very interesting Mike. And smart. I've written about the death of principles; about how people support their team no matter what and won't give the other team credit – for anything. That's a form of hypocrisy, I think. But I like the way you put it. One problem: If Time magazine picked the Hypocrite as Person of the Year they'd be hypocrites too – for spotting hypocrites outside the media while ignoring the many hypocrites inside the media. I'm either on a roll – or just rambling, right?

**Greetings Mr. Goldberg: I know that Joseph McCarthy has been vilified by the left for decades, but I have to ask: Was this totally fair? Since the fall of the old Soviet Union, and release of the Venona Project in which former KGB agents pretty much admitted that YES, there actually WERE many Communist spies in America's beloved institutions undermining our way of life (so to speak), wouldn't this new information exonerate Senator McCarthy somewhat? Okay, he may have gone overboard eventually, but I have to wonder if perhaps much of the vitriol toward the late "red scare icon" is aimed at him because, well, many in the left wing mainstream press are angry because Senator McCarthy ruined a lot of their "comrades" back in the day. Truthfully, weren't there several communist agents in FDR's cabinet? Didn't the communists try to smear their own who turned on them and exposed them (Elia Kazan and Whittaker Chambers, for example). As always, I look forward to your analysis. Have a great day! – The Emperor**

Smart question Emperor but I'm not the best guy to answer it. I know what went on during that time, but I'm no expert by any means. I think the legitimate rap on McCarthy is – as you said – he went overboard. He tried to take down too many people, many of whom really were innocent. And there's the famous question asked of McCarthy by the Army's lawyer – a question that brought the senator down for the count: "Until this moment, Senator, I think I never really gauged your cruelty or your recklessness." When McCarthy tried to continue

his attack on one of Welch's young staff lawyers, Welch interrupted, "Let us not assassinate this lad further, senator. You have done enough. Have you no sense of decency?"

Sorry I'm not all that helpful this time around, E.

**Bernie, it appears that you and John Daly work closely together and have similar beliefs. How did that come about and have you read all of his Coleman books? – Mike S.**

I was reading the comments under one of my columns and I noticed that this guy, John Daly, could really write – and really think. It had nothing to do with whether he agreed with me or not. At some point I asked if he would write a column for my website. Thankfully he said yes. Despite the close working relationship, we've never said hello to each other in person. But I can tell you this without a nanosecond of hesitation: He's a good person. I'd be lost without his help regarding the website. In fact, I'm nominating him for a Nobel Prize – in something or other. As for the Coleman books: The last fiction I read was "A Tale of Two Cities" – and that was a few days after it came out ... in 1859.

**In one of your Real Sports pieces on Russia, I recall that you and your crew were detained and possibly incarcerated by the Russian police (the government didn't like what you were looking into). What was that experience like? Were you worried that it would turn into a much more serious/dangerous situation? Did they turn you into a Russian asset? (I'm joking about that last one). – Jen R.**

Yes, Jen, we were detained but not incarcerated. For the first hour and a half I was holding court with our Russian/Ukrainian crew telling (dirty) jokes. I was never worried. But ... after it dragged on (eventually for 4 hours) I was getting more than a little annoyed. The army interrogators questioned me first. All men and one young woman. She's the only one of that crew who spoke English. I've never told this

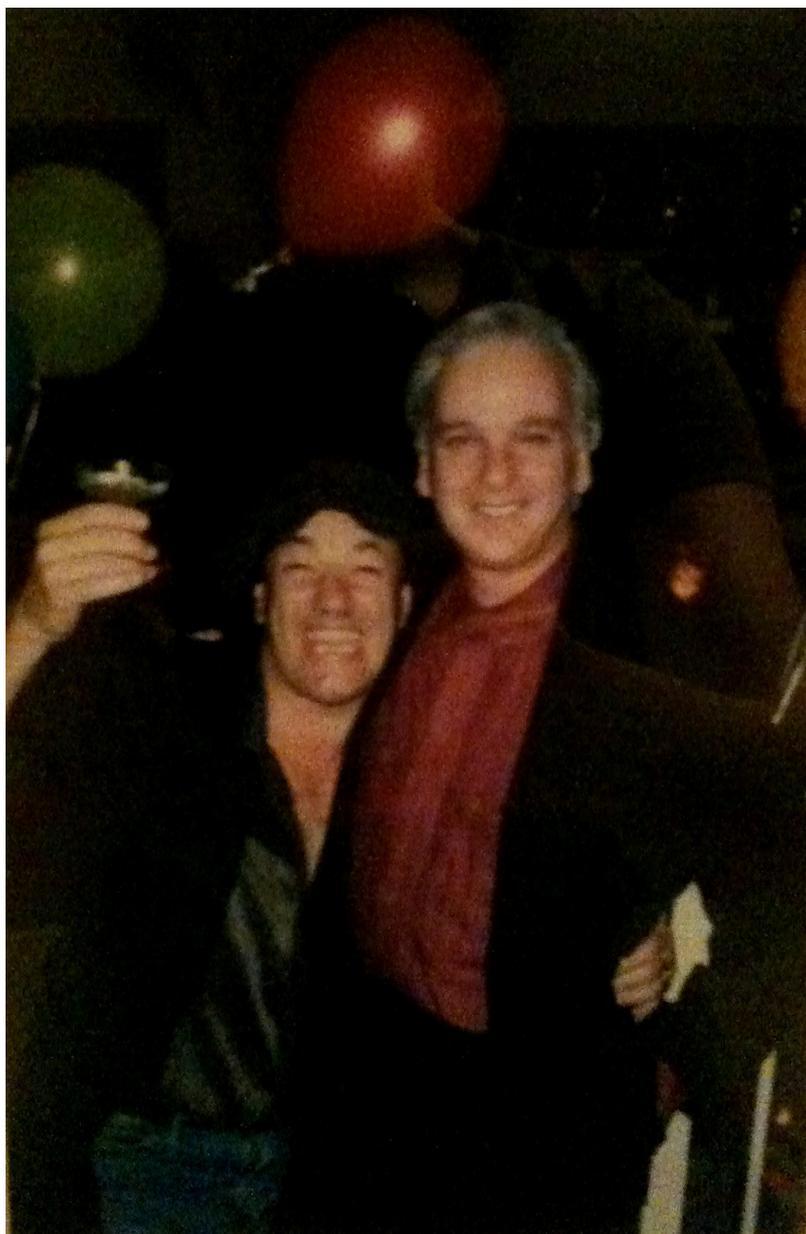
part of the story before: At the end of the interrogation I asked the Russian woman, "You speak English, right?" She said yes. Then I pointed to her male comrades and said, "Tell your friends, this is bullshit!" And I turned, Clint Eastwood like, and walked out. It was my small way of saying this whole episode was worthy of a Barney Fife arrest. Our "crime" was shooting a story in a zone that didn't allow journalists – a fact we didn't even know. Big deal!

I'm glad you remembered the story, Jen.

**Dear Bernie, I'm offended by Donna Brazille's new [Fox News] 'Contributor' status. All she does is pivot and shill. A real phony! If you saw her 'interview' with Laura Ingalls on Jussie you know what I mean. What are your thoughts on her? – Ronald M.**

If you're a cable news organization you want to hire contributors who will give honest analyses that come from special knowledge about a subject. Hiring a political operative is always risky. They're likely to deliver the party line – not objective analysis. She's just one of many on all the cable news channels whose opinions I'd listen to – but then consider the source. You make a valid point, Ronald.

**There's a photo on your social media with you and Brian Johnson from AC/DC. (Editor's note: Picture has been posted below). How did this pic come about, and what type of music do you generally like? Thanks. – Andrew D.**



This is crazy. I met Brian Johnson at Gatwick Airport in London. He saw a CBS News tag on my bag and asked if I worked there. I said I did then asked what he did for a living. Brilliant, right? He said he was in a band, AC/DC. I said, "They're big, right?" He said, "Pretty big." He had a girlfriend (now his wife) who worked at CBS who I knew. We became friends. He's a good guy.

As for the picture, it was taken at my house when I lived in Miami. Brian and his wife came over for my wife's birthday party. And he actually sang for the crowd. No fooling! As for my music: Sinatra and 60s rock n roll.

**“License to Lie” is a 2014 original print date for a book by Sidney Powell. If you’ve read it, I’d be interested in your take. I found it disheartening. If you’ve not read it, I’d recommend you do so. Enjoy your erudite observations. Thanks for making a difference.” – Robert A.**

Thanks for the kind words Robert. I appreciate them very much. Have not read the book, but will look into it.

**My take on Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is that she is the Sarah Palin of the Left. Both are young, physically attractive, dogmatic political personalities who drive the other side crazy. They are also basically dumb as a rock and prone to say stupid, ditzy things. Except the Leftist media hang on AOC’s every word. If she were conservative, her character would be on SNL every week. Are you with me on this? – Steve R.**

I Love your analysis, Steve. Especially the part about how if AOC were a conservative she’d be on SNL every week being portrayed as a total doofus. The media love shiny objects, people who stand out from the pack. And they latch on to them because they’re not dull – and as we know, dull is the worst thing you can be on television. (The president sort of fits into this shiny object category. Just saying’.) But the media may tire of AOC. They’ve got Beto and the Mayor who are also young, attractive and different. She may have to up her game to stay relevant. This could be fun.

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Thanks, everyone! You can send me questions for next week **using the form below!** You can also read previous Q&A sessions by [clicking here](#).

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