

The Media Elite Didn't See the Tsunami Coming

I'm going to take a wild guess and say that nobody in what passes for the mainstream media saw the tsunami coming, the wave of discontent that we witnessed on Election Day.

I'm sure there were one or two journalists who said something like, "*Of course Trump must be taken seriously because, as we all know (ha ha) he could win.*" But I'm pretty sure that's not what they were saying privately. And how many thought Trump would win and the GOP would hang onto both the House *and* the Senate? I'll be generous and say it was a number slightly greater than zero – if not zero.

It's no secret that reporters were rooting for Hillary. All that was missing were buttons on their coats saying, "I'm with her." As Will Rahn nicely put it on the CBS News website: "Had Hillary Clinton won, there'd be a winking 'we did it' feeling in the press, a sense that we were brave and called Trump a liar and saved the republic."

The media elite thought she was right when she said half of Trump supporters belonged in a basket of deplorables. They thought if his minions weren't racist or sexist, they were, you know, not too smart.

So on Election Day, voters fed up with the arrogance of the elites didn't only reject Hillary Clinton. Or Barack Obama. Or his legacy. Or big swatches of liberal culture in general. They also rejected in particular the liberal elite in the media, the ones who thought they were smarter than ordinary Americans, and better than them too.

All of this got me thinking about something I wrote in my second book, *Arrogance*, in 2003, in a chapter entitled, "Lose the Enablers." Here's some of what I said:

“It’s not just a cliché. Confession really is good for the soul. So now it’s time to move on.

“Literally!

“Alcoholics need to smash the bottle. Druggies need to flush their stuff down the toilet. And the media elites need to leave New York City. Simple as that!”

I went on to say, “There are too many enablers in New York, too many liberals whom the media elites are shamelessly trying to please.”

And the enablers, I wrote, “keep telling their friends that they don’t have a bias problem, that they’re doing just fine, that only those right-wing nuts think there’s a liberal bias problem in the news.”

So what to do? Here’s what I suggested: “I have come up with a list of five very nice places in this great country of ours, any one of which would be a good choice for ABC, NBC and CBS to locate their new worldwide news division headquarters, far from New York City.”

I suggested, Tupelo, Mississippi ... Mitchel, South Dakota ... Oklahoma City ... Indianapolis ... and Laughlin, Nevada.

I could have picked a hundred different cities and towns. The places I settled on mattered only because they were *not* New York City or Washington, D.C.

I understand that the sophisticates who populate America’s liberal newsrooms would rather drink battery acid and walk on shards of broken glass before they’d live in any of those places. But, in *Arrogance* I asked, “Wouldn’t it be a good thing for the elites to live among people who have a different worldview than they do? Wouldn’t it be helpful if the elites sent their children to *public* school with the children of people who work at the [Mitchell, South Dakota] Corn Palace or

the Oklahoma Opry or at Don Laughlin's casino [in Nevada]? What is so wrong with that? Are they afraid their kids will get cooties if they sit next to 'regular' kids? And while we're on the subject, why would it be any worse than what we have now: elite parents sending their elite children to school with the elite children of other elite parents?

"What kind of diversity is that?"

Living in any of those places between Manhattan and Malibu would make them better journalists, I wrote. "Too many newsmen and newswomen don't know the kinds of people who live in places like that."

In any of those places, journalists would be exposed to people with different views – on abortion, on guns, on how to deal with terrorism, and on a lot of other hot issues of our time.

Right now, too many journalists live in a comfortable, elite, liberal bubble where they can go for a day, a week, a month, a year ... and just about never run into someone with a different opinion on the thorniest issues confronting our country.

That's not good for journalism and it's why journalists didn't understand what Trump was tapping into. The people he was attracting, by and large, weren't elites living in a bubble, the people journalists knew best. They were ordinary Americans trying to get by.

I was a correspondent at CBS News for 28 years. So I speak with some credibility, I think, when I say that too many journalists are smug. And during this recent campaign they dismissed the angst of ordinary Americans who they never really liked or respected anyway. And on Election Day, ordinary Americans rejected them, the journalists who didn't see the tsunami coming.

If they were living in Tupelo, maybe they would have.