

It's Not the Lie... It's That the Media Suddenly Cares

❌ What exactly constitutes a scandal?

I see that question debated on the Internet from time to time, as well as on the news networks. Many people impulsively associate the term with an illegal activity, but the textbook definition of it is actually quite broad and thus fairly subjective: *A disgraceful or discreditable action*. Thus, what some people would consider a scandal, many others might not.

In the realm of politics, however, I've come to realize (especially over the past few years) that the term "scandal" has a much different meaning – one that is quite narrow, actually.

A political scandal is whatever the media *wants* to be a political scandal.

And when I'm referring to "the media," I'm not just talking about a group of outliers like a single cable news network and a handful of other journalists. I'm talking about a *media consensus* in which most of the major outlets have identified the action and recognize that action as being *disgraceful and discreditable*.

For nearly five years, the media largely overlooked the disreputable (and sometimes reprehensible) activities that the Obama administration was involved in – ones that they would have assuredly obsessed over had George W. Bush still been in office.

They treated *Fast and Furious* as a joke. They ran interference on Benghazi, showing painfully little curiosity in what actually happened that night, and then bending over backwards to try and rationalize the falsehoods repeatedly told by the

administration as a mere *communication problem*. They were more intent on distancing the president from the IRS's illegal harassment of conservative groups than investigating the White House's possible links to that harassment. The wire-tapping of reporter James Rosen, on the grounds that he may have been a co-conspirator with North Korea, has all but been forgotten. They shrugged their shoulders at Obama's incoherent (yet highly consequential) policy on Syria, and later bolstered the ridiculous argument that Vladimir Putin's diffusion of the situation was somehow part of our president's *master plan*.

One could make the case that the media's handling of these stories was every bit as scandalous as the stories themselves.

With the roll-out of Obamacare, however, the landscape seems to have suddenly changed. The media is actually scrutinizing the Healthcare.gov debacle and asking tough questions about who knew what and when. Journalists, in large numbers, are actually calling out the president's repeated false statements in his selling of Obamacare, and are holding him accountable not only for those statements, but for his latest, mind-boggling assertion that he never made such statements in the first place.

Yes folks, journalists seem to finally be doing their jobs!

Why now? I think a lot of it's because President Obama isn't going anywhere. The guy the media invested so much energy into getting elected twice won't be running for office again. He's *locked in* for the next three years so their mission to achieve the *greater good* has already been accomplished. In that sense, these journalists might be feeling less pressure to show up to the games and cheer-lead his path to victory.

But part of me also wonders if they feel betrayed. The dream of government healthcare had been burning in the hearts of liberals for decades – long before their love affair with Barack Obama ever began. And despite all of the examples of

where government intrusion into healthcare has failed across the world, many on the left (including the vast majority of journalists) believe such a system is beneficial to society and will make life better for everyone.

I don't think that most liberals in the media acted as advocates for the Affordable Care Act simply because they adored President Obama. While that was certainly part of it, I think they really did believe in the cause, serving as activists instead of journalists and further sacrificing their legitimacy with the American public in the process.

They did it because they were true believers. They viewed Obamacare the same way Joe Biden viewed it: As a big f'n deal.

Imagine how people in the media felt, then, when they discovered that the administration approached their *dream's* roll-out with inexplicable, jaw-dropping incompetence in the form of an untested, total dud of a website. It probably felt to them as if they had been stood-up on prom-night, left alone on a front-porch, decked out in fancy clothes and hairdos with nowhere to go.

And just like a love-struck school girl who ignored all of her friends' warnings about her *dream guy's* repeated false promises, the media had to witness the blatant deception *first-hand* before finally realizing that many Americans, in fact, do *not* get to keep their current doctors and health plans. 

In other words, this is now a big deal because the media's emotions were toyed with. They're feeling scorned, thus they've finally managed to recognize a scandal.

Unfortunately, as we can see by the president's plummeting approval ratings, the public *only* seems to see a problem when the media sees a problem. Conservatives like myself would love to believe that the mainstream media has marginalized itself

beyond influence because of their biases, but that just isn't true. They're still quite relevant because their collective narratives usually do sink into mainstream America, one way or another.

Will the media continue to challenge the administration with this degree of vigor for the next three years? No. Of course not. They'll patch things up with the president, as is the fate of many bad relationships.

And to the country's detriment, when the media no longer sees a problem, neither will many Americans.