



STUDY GUIDE

WHO DOES THE MEDIA MOST WANT TO SILENCE?

KEY TERMS:

media
mocking

omission
objectivism

tokenism
labeling

NOTE-TAKING COLUMN: Complete this section <u>during</u> the video. Include definitions and key terms.	CUE COLUMN: Complete this section <u>after</u> the video.
<p>Who was the first female justice appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court?</p> <p>According to the Pew Research study, how many women are Democrats?</p> <p>How many Republican women did Glamour magazine recognize as Women Of The Year in 2018?</p>	<p>In what ways does the media suppress, demean, and belittle conservative women?</p> <p>How should conservative women respond to what the major media does?</p>

DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Towards the beginning of the video, Ms. Higgins notes that, “The major media like to pretend all women think alike and that conservative women are just the exception that proves the rule. But according to a 2018 Pew Research study, about a third of women are Democrats; a little less than a third are Republican; and a little more than a third are independents. So, if there are all these conservative women around, how does the media make it seem like they barely exist?” Why do you think that the major media consistently and fallaciously makes such sweeping generalizations regarding groups of people, especially women? Explain. How would you answer Ms. Higgins last question?
- Ms. Higgins answers her last question by explaining that the media uses multiple strategies to downgrade the value and standing of conservative women- the first strategy being “... Omission: If you don’t see something, you don’t have to deal with it... Glamour magazine recognized 11 Democrat women among their 2018 Women of the Year. No Republican made the cut. First Lady Michelle Obama was on the cover of Vogue three times. First Lady and former fashion model Melania Trump? So far, not once. Every now and again the major media will do a story about a female conservative to ‘balance things out.’ But, let’s be honest, it’s not balance, it’s tokenism.” Why do you think that Melania Trump has not yet been featured on the cover of Vogue or recognized as a Woman of the Year? What do you think Ms. Higgins means by stating that major media only doing a story about a female conservative figure on occasion as being ‘tokenism?’ Explain.
- Ms. Higgins goes on to point out that, “The second strategy the media uses to diminish conservative women is Mocking: Making fun of a woman’s appearance discounts what she says. You would think the major media would resist this kind of objectification. But they don’t. Not if the target is a conservative woman.” In what ways, specifically, can criticizing a woman’s appearance diminish the validity of that woman’s thoughts and opinions? Explain. Do you see this sort of female objectification by major media as hypocritical? Why or why not? Do you see this behavior by the major media as juvenile? Why or why not?
- Later in the video, Ms. Higgins further explains that, “The third strategy the media uses to demean conservative women is Labeling: Using stereotypes precludes there being a valid reason for conservative women to hold the positions they do. The major media simply can’t accept that conservatives have serious and important reasons for their beliefs. So, they have come up with answers to explain this seeming anomaly to themselves: these women must be racist, or self-hating, or just weak-minded... Labeling, like the strategies of mocking or omission, is just another way to display contempt and demonize conservative women. Its purpose is to persuade you to not treat those being labeled with respect, to ignore their ideas, and to even avoid associating with them.” Why do you think that the major media refuses to accept that conservative women’s beliefs are just as meaningful as the beliefs of Leftist women? Explain. Why do you think that the Leftist media, which claims to value equality and inclusion, works so hard to exclude, disrespect, and devalue so many women? Explain.
- At the end of the video, Ms. Higgins concludes that, “...if you hold conservative views, you have a particularly important role to play. You need to speak out — to your friends, your family, and your co-workers. Let them hear your thinking. And then let them make up their

own minds. The media may pretend you don't exist; they may even mock or label you. They want to intimidate you into silence. That's not fair, and that's not right. Don't let them." What is 'not right' about the media trying to intimidate and vilify those with conservative views? Do you think that Ms. Higgins is appealing exclusively to women here? Why or why not?

EXTEND THE LEARNING:

CASE STUDY: Vanity Fair

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the articles "Column: Nancy Jo Sales ... Don't Buy What She's Selling," and "Vanity Fair's Article About Conservative Women On UNC's Campus Just Proves Polarization Exists," then answer the questions that follow.

- What was the Vanity Fair article about? What had the victims of the article hoped to accomplish by being interviewed? How did Nancy Jo Sales deceive the interviewees, and what did Nancy Jo Sales do to the interviewees in the end? How did people at the university respond to the article? Who is Elin Slavik, and how did she further victimize the women interviewed for the article? How did others treat the women interviewed in the article? What was the response to the article from the women who were interviewed? Who is Susan King, and what was her perspective on the article? What should we stop making blanket statements about?
- What do you think compelled Nancy Jo Sales and Vanity Fair to victimize and demonize those women? Which of the strategies outlined by Ms. Higgins in the video did Nancy Jo Sales use in her article to devalue conservative women? Why do you think that these two women journalists, Livy Polen and Ally Miller, reacted the way they did to the Vanity Fair article? Explain. Why is it so important for conservative women to respond to what the major media does to them?
- Do you think that women's voices that advocate for conservative values should be heard, respected, and treated at least as equally to those on the other side? Why or why not? Why do you think that feminists are not outraged by this Vanity Fair article, nor by other examples of conservative women being treated poorly- i.e. why do you think that many feminists tend to only advocate for equality and rights for some women, but not all women? Explain.



QUIZ

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 - b. Ruth Bader Ginsburg
 - c. Sandra Day O'Connor
 - d. None of the above.

- 2. According to the Pew Research study, _____ of women are Republican.**
 - a. a little less than a third
 - b. a third
 - c. a little more than a third
 - d. None of the above.

- 3. Glamour magazine recognized 11 Democrat women among their 2018 Women of the Year, but no Republican women.**
 - a. True
 - b. False

- 4. Sarah Huckabee Sanders, the White House press secretary, and Kellyanne Conway, the first woman to run a winning presidential campaign are routinely belittled for _____.**
 - a. their hair
 - b. their eye makeup
 - c. their weight
 - d. All of the above.

- 5. Ayaan Hirsi Ali strengthens her voice swimming against the media tide by taking on which cause?**
 - a. Global warming
 - b. Oppressed women living in radical Islamist societies
 - c. Gentrification
 - d. Legalizing recreational marijuana



QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

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<https://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2018/12/column-nancy-jo-sales-dont-buy-what-shes-selling-12-3>

Column: Nancy Jo Sales ... Don't Buy What She's Selling



BY [Livy Polen](#)

Last Thursday, Vanity Fair published an article written by Nancy Jo Sales titled, “‘They Say We’re White Supremacists’: Inside the Strange World of Conservative College Women.” Over a series of months, 54-year-old Sales pretended to befriend four conservative women at UNC-Chapel Hill, treated them to dinner and even gifted them signed copies of her book "American Girls: Social Media and the Secret Life of Teenagers," a depiction of the psychological dangers from online harassment. A mother to a college-aged daughter herself, she acted as their advocate with a desire to highlight their experiences as young female conservatives. The four students participated in hours of interviews, hoping to promote civil political discourse. Textual evidence confirms Sales agreed to run the women’s featured quotes by them before the article’s release, but no such promise was kept. In fact, without warning them at all, the article suddenly appeared on a national platform. It was grotesquely slanderous and exploitative, and now she won’t return their calls.

Nancy Jo Sales is not a journalist; she is an unethical solicitor. She used her position of power to manipulate the women into disclosing the most deeply personal aspects of their lives, including sexual assault and family divorce, for her own career advancement. Her professionally immature article reeks of irony: She mocks conservative women for feeling judged and morally attacked by judging and morally attacking them, describing them as, “the most despised women in America.” Where is the feminist outcry?

Unsurprisingly, Chapel Hill's common senselessness and blind trust in the media fueled the ruthless torment of the young women. A newspaper column vilified them as existential threats to the lives of others. Mighty keyboard warriors took it to an exclusive social media page to pin them as "white supremacists." UNC Professor Elin Slavick, whose Facebook cover photo features her European travels, slammed them as "privileged fools." (Maybe they'll check their privilege when Slavick checks her bags at the airport.) Since the article's release, the women have endured relentless, inflammatory accusations against their character based on misinformation, exacerbating a phenomenon that affects conservative women nationwide.

The women insist they are directly misquoted, that their quotes lack appropriate context and that they are ultimately subjects of journalistic predation. Sales, either ill intentioned or toxically ignorant, selectively manipulated quotes to further her own bias and cater to Chapel Hill's nearly politically monotonous audience. When quoting one woman, she inserted racially charged words within brackets; a grammatical tool typically used to clarify meaning, here used to misconstrue the statement's original point. Even though the article is littered with obvious falsities, inaccurately depicting Chapel Hill as mountainous, bullies apparently found her credible enough to justify the character assassination of the four women that consumed students' social media accounts. At least Sales gave them copies of her book to help them cope with their harassment.

Last week, The Daily Tar Heel featured an op-ed written by Susan King, dean of the UNC School of Media and Journalism, where she defended journalists amidst an era of public distrust. She stresses journalists must stand together as a profession, as trust in the media is "under assault." Here's a newsflash with actual credibility: it's not "assault" when victims of slander act in self defense.

King's promotion of journalistic cultism is dangerous for the future of ethical news coverage — just because there are good journalists does not mean all journalists are good. *Nancy Jo Sales abused women who told their assault stories*. She demonstrates that preying upon the most vulnerable aspects of individuals' lives and manufacturing intentionally misleading statements to further vilify those with whom we disagree is indefensible journalism.

The history of truth and fairness in American journalism is far from perfect. To name only a couple examples, in 1981, Janet Cooke won a Pulitzer Prize for a fabricated story about a child addicted to heroin. In 2003, Jayson Blair resigned from The New York Times for writing stories with false accounts of Iraq War veterans. No one should condemn this deceptive journalism more than other journalists.

Responsible journalists have a duty to reclaim this tarnished industry, for untruthful journalism breeds unnecessary political division. Journalism must be saved from the crooks that undermine its critical role within a functioning democracy. It takes intelligence to understand people can disagree with us yet draw their conclusions morally and logically. Maybe we should unite our energy against the dishonesty used to profit from our duplicity.

And meanwhile, ladies, let's support *these women*.

<https://www.theodysseyonline.com/vanity-fair-unc-conservative-women>

Vanity Fair's Article About Conservative Women On UNC's Campus Just Proves Polarization Exists

Hey Vanity Fair, just because they're different, doesn't mean they're strange.

Ally Miller Dec 3, 2018

On November 28, 2018, Vanity Fair posted a political article about conservative college women. The article, titled, "THEY SAY WE'RE WHITE SUPREMACISTS": INSIDE THE STRANGE WORLD OF CONSERVATIVE COLLEGE WOMEN," follows the lives of a few of UNC-Chapel Hill's female students and the role they play in the republican community.

While there is absolutely nothing wrong with highlighting differences among college students, this article makes these women seem frankly like brain-washed children that can't think for themselves. To that, I say shame on you, Vanity Fair. Who are you to discourage different opinions? Who are you to shame young women for standing up for the things they believe in? Who are you to marginalize smart women who have done their own research and made their own supported choices?

As members of the future generation of decision-makers, we deserve better. As women, we deserve better. As citizens in a nation seemingly falling apart, we deserve better.

This political season, however long you choose to define that period, has been one of pure exhaustion. As a nation, most of us are tired in all sense of the word. We find ourselves running from anything political and shying away from any type of political conversation with friends and family. Newsflash (pun fully intended), that is the absolute worst thing we could be doing. At no point in time was our nation intended to be divided between two political parties that hate the other with such a burning passion. I am shocked by the number of great people so willing to preach about inclusivity, love, and respect, yet so willing to show so much hate towards the opposite political party from them.

This article is about much more than whether or not you agree with the statements made. This article represents a much larger polarization of our nation that is more detrimental than any article published or news broadcast aired. Shouldn't we be living in a nation conducive to conflicting ideas and butting opinions? Who cares who your neighbor voted for or what bumper sticker your sibling chooses to display on their car? It seems that most, if not all, of those around me value the democratic system. Very few I've spoken to have expressed an interest in getting rid of that foundation. The democratic system we so rely on is built on differences of people and opinions.

No matter where you sit on the political spectrum, you should respect the other side enough to listen. This Vanity Fair article poses UNC as a university that makes conservative students feel "depressed" and "unsafe". Those two words are not words that should make any university proud of the environment they have created. In an era of feminism and female empowerment, why are we discouraging college women from expressing their views? They are not "strange" for voicing an unpopular opinion.

The example George Bush Sr. set in loving others is one that will live on forever. His final letter to Clinton before leaving the White House read, "You will be *our* President when you read this note. I wish you well.

I wish your family well. Your success now is our country's success. I am rooting hard for you." Even after an extremely emotional loss to another political party, Bush stood behind Clinton as a person rather than an enemy recognizing his value as a person and respecting his new position.

Maybe it's time we start seeing people as people and not as parties. Maybe it's time for us to stop making blanket statements about people and parties as if they fit into a structured mold. We are people. People that deserve to be treated better than we've been treating each other.