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From: Morning Media
Sent: Wed 12/6/2017 10:35:01 AM
Subject: Morning Media: How Weinstein manipulated the media — National Enquirer editor accused of sexual misconduct — Lipman leaves USA Today — Breitbart expands on SiriusXM — MSNBC's 'afraid' of Cernovich

By Michael Calderone | 12/06/2017 05:33 AM EDT

HARVEY WEINSTEIN SURELY COULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN away with decades of alleged sexual misconduct if it weren't for his media enablers. The disgraced film mogul "held off press scrutiny with a mix of threats and enticements, drawing reporters close with the lure of access to stars, directors and celebrity-packed parties," the New York Times reported Tuesday night in a quintuple-byline blockbuster drawn from nearly 200 interviews and documents.

- **"Some journalists negotiated book and movie deals** with him even as they were assigned to cover him. The studio chief once paid a gossip writer to collect juicy celebrity tidbits that Mr. Weinstein could use to barter if other reporters stumbled onto an affair he was trying to keep quiet," the Times reported. "He was so close to David J. Pecker, the chief executive of American Media Inc., which owns The Enquirer, that he was known in the tabloid industry as an untouchable 'F.O.P.,' or 'friend of Pecker.' That status was shared by a chosen few, including President Trump."

- **A few days before the 2016 election**, the Wall Street Journal reported how Pecker's American Media once agreed to buy a former Playboy model's story of an alleged 2006 affair with Trump and never published the account, a practice known as "catch and kill" in the tabloid world. The Times reported Tuesday how American Media tried to buy an actress's 2015 account of Weinstein groping her to similarly squash it - though a deal never happened. However, Dylan Howard, the National Enquirer's editor-in-chief and American Media's chief content officer, worked with Weinstein in other capacities and even "dispatched reporters to find information that could undermine accusers," according to the Times.

- **The Times latest Weinstein bombshell dropped** just hours after The Associated Press reported that former employees accused Howard of sexual misconduct, of having "openly described his sexual partners in the newsroom, discussed female employees' sex lives and forced women to watch or listen to pornographic material." The alleged behavior sparked a 2012 company inquiry when Howard was working in the company's Los Angeles office. Howard quit following that investigation, but returned a year later to American Media's New York office in a higher-level position.

- **Howard dismissed the claims of ex-employees** to the AP as "baseless." An American Media lawyer told the AP that the investigation found that none of Howard's behavior "rose to the level of harassment that would require termination." The lawyer characterized the editor's actions as "horsing around outside the office, going to bars and things that are not uncommon in the media business."

Good morning and welcome to Morning Media. I included some media nuggets that stood out,

but the entire Times piece is a must-read. Please send tips to mcalderrone@politico.com and @mlcalderrone. Daniel Lippman ([@dlippman](https://twitter.com/dlippman)) contributed to the newsletter. [Archives](#). [Subscribe](#).

TUNE IN: TIME'S 'PERSON OF THE YEAR': Editor-in-chief Ed Felsenthal will announce the winner around 7:30 a.m. on the Today show. The [shortlist](#) includes the Colin Kaepernick, the #MeToo Movement, and President Trump, who we can assume will be watching - and tweeting?

JOANNE LIPMAN, the chief content officer and editor in chief of USA Today, is leaving at the company at the end of the year to focus on her book on closing the gender gap in the workplace. "The heightened focus on sexual harassment has led to a flood of interest and opportunities surrounding my upcoming book about closing the gender gap," Lipman told staff on Tuesday. Some expressed surprise with the departure given that Lipman was the public face of Gannett, later rebranded as the USA Today Network. Temple University journalism dean David Boardman [tweeted](#) that Lipman "was the best thing to happen to @gannett in years."

- **In addition to serving as** USA Today's top editor, Lipman also helped merge Gannett's 100-plus newspapers, such the Des Moines Register, Cincinnati Enquirer, and Arizona Republic, into a more cohesive structure. "We have boots on the ground across the country, in red states and in blue states, in big cities and small towns and rural areas," Lipman [told CJR](#) in March. "To me, that's incredibly exciting because it's so different than the major national news organizations."

BREITBART LAUNCHES RADIO EXPANSION: Breitbart News chief Steve Bannon has rejoined a morning show, Breitbart News Daily, and the right-wing site's radio network is expanding with new weeknight show on SiriusXM's Patriot channel, hosted by West Coast editors Rebecca Mansour and Joel Pollak. It has plans for more weekend programming.

- **"As I have said all along, everything I brought to the Trump campaign** came directly from the listeners I spoke with every morning on Breitbart News Daily on SiriusXM's Patriot channel," Bannon said in a statement. "From the moment I left the White House, getting back behind the microphone was very important to me. To get on the road outside the Beltway and to spend time with the great men and women of America is an honor."

ALSO JUST LAUNCHED: ["50 States of Blue,"](#) a new site for local news and progressive politics. "We have reached a moment when there are more local stories with national implications than ever," Howard Megdal, founder and editor-in-chief, said in a statement. "We will provide a conduit to these issues, stakeholders and movements through our passionate, intellectually honest pursuit of the stories that matter."

HOW NEW '60 MINUTES' BOOK EVOLVED: Longtime executive producer Jeff Fager took over writing the iconic newsmagazine's 50th anniversary book "after objecting to the direction" of original author Richard Zoglin, who was "focusing too much on the negative," [according to the New York Times](#).

- **"Specifically, Mr. Fager expressed concern** that Mr. Zoglin had asked his interview subjects about the treatment of women in the '60 Minutes' workplace, according to three people who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe sensitive internal matters," report John Koblin

and Michael Grynbaum. "Mr. Fager also asked Mr. Zoglin why he had brought up the rocky tenure of Katie Couric, a onetime correspondent for the show and former CBS News anchor who left the network on bad terms."

JEFF GLOR BRINGS DIGITAL CHOPS TO 'CBS EVENING NEWS': The Los Angeles Times' Stephen Battaglio writes that network executives see Glor's experience at streaming network CBSN as a real asset for the anchor desk. "Our entire newsroom needs a jolt of a new reality," Steve Capus, executive producer of "CBS Evening News," told the paper. "Our output is being consumed a lot of different ways and if we think about it too narrowly, we're missing a big segment of the audience."

MSNBC'S 'AFRAID' OF MIKE CERNOVICH: Liberal commentator and "Majority Report" podcast host Sam Seder told The Washington Post's Erik Wemple that he believes MSNBC is "afraid" of right-wing blogger and media personality Mike Cernovich, and others who amplified a 2009 tweet that led to the network cutting ties with him.

- **In a video statement**, Seder recalled being "disgusted" eight years ago as Hollywood figures defended "child rapist" Roman Polanski simply because he was also a good director. Seder posted a tweet intended to be satirical, to mock those excusing Polanski's deeds, that he says has now been willfully misrepresented by people acting in bad faith. MSNBC responded to the social media outrage by not renewing Seder's contract when it ends in February.

- **The network, which boasts a progressive prime-time lineup**, has come under fire from the left for appearing to cave to a right-wing blogger who has had success in the past applying pressure on a media company over an intended joke on Twitter. Cernovich told Wemple on Tuesday that it was a "conspiracy theory" to blame him for Seder's situation. Meanwhile, Seder has started a GoFundMe fund to defend against attempts to drive away his podcast advertisers.

SOUNDS BITES

"The entire culture and our politics are now dominated by people who have weaponized bad faith and shamelessness." [Chris Hayes]

"Everyone should subscribe to ... The Majority Report." [Chris Hayes]

"Before Seder/MSNBC, there was NPR axing its CEO. See my 2011 post: They Brought a Tote Bag to a Knife Fight: [Jay Rosen]

JAMES MURDOCH AS BOB IGER SUCCESSOR? The Financial Times reports that the Murdoch son has been suggested as a possible future CEO of Disney amid talks over the sale of 21st Century Fox entertainment assets (which doesn't include Fox broadcast network, Fox News, or Fox Business). James Murdoch is expected to take a senior role at Disney if the deal goes through, with Iger scheduled to retire in 2019.

AL FRANKEN WAS TAKEN OFF Foreign Policy magazine's Global Thinkers list when the sexual harassment allegations about him were revealed. A magazine spokeswoman told my

colleague Daniel Lippman: "We were planning to make him an awardee but removed him from the list when we heard of his inappropriate behavior." Franken's office did not reply to a request for comment. *The list* <http://atfp.co/2AyyBNA>

BEST OF 2017: The New Yorker has listed its top 25 most-read stories of the year, leading with Ronan Farrow's investigation of Harvey Weinstein and followed by Anthony Scaramucci's expletive-filled call to Ryan Lizza.

APPLY: The Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard and the Abrams Foundation have launched a new local investigative journalism fellowship. "In the coming year, the new fellowship will fund up to three Nieman Fellowships for U.S. journalists who cover news in areas of the United States where resources are scarce," the announcement read. "In addition to studying at Harvard University for an academic year, the Abrams Nieman Fellowship will include a fieldwork period, during which fellows will work on a public service journalism project for up to nine months."

REVOLVING DOOR

Veteran foreign correspondent and video journalist **Stephen Farrell** was named Jerusalem bureau chief of Reuters, where he'll lead coverage of Israel and the Palestinian territories. For the Times of London, Farrell reported extensively from war zones, including in the Balkans, Afghanistan, and Iraq, and throughout the Middle East. He joined the New York Times in 2007, beginning in Baghdad, before moving several years later to New York to work on video projects.

POLITICO's own **Ali Watkins** is heading to the New York Times as a national security reporter. While an intern, Watkins was part of a 2013 McClatchy team that was a Pulitzer-finalist team reporting on CIA spying on the Senate Intelligence Committee. She later worked at HuffPost and BuzzFeed.

Monica Drake, a senior editor running the New York Times' travel section, has been promoted to a masthead-level position of assistant managing editor, overseeing new digital features and projects. "Having Monica join the masthead is a testament to the importance of her new job and our belief that the Times newsroom should play a leading role in securing our economic future, just as it did in the 1970s when a host of new sections broadened the paper's appeal," top editors Dean Baquet and Joe Kahn wrote in a memo.

Jeff Mays is joining the New York Times to cover City Hall and politics, deputy editor Dean Chang announced on Twitter.

ADDENDUM: Yesterday, Morning Media suggested that Fox News Radio's Jon Decker, who just passed the D.C. bar, may be the only lawyer in the White House press corps. It turns out Reuters White House correspondent Jim Oliphant has a law degree from Ohio State (and was also once editor-in-chief of Legal Times). In addition, Guardian political reporter Ben Jacobs graduated from Duke law school.

EXTRAS

- Corey Lewandowski and David Bossie continue to claim the New York Times provided an advance story to Paul Manafort during the campaign, a charge the paper denies.
- TheSkimm is exploring a possible sale.
- Wall Street Journal editors urge staff to be more precise when referencing millennials.
- At a media conference, News Corp's Robert Thomson discussed Fox News-Mark Zuckerberg meeting mentioned in yesterday's Morning Media. He also called YouTube a "toxic waste dump."

To view online:

<http://www.politico.com/media/newsletters/morning-media/2017/12/06/how-weinstein-manipulated-the-press-national-enquirer-editor-accused-of-sexual-misconduct-lipman-leaves-usa-today-breitbart-expands-on-siriusxm-msnbcs-afraid-of-cernovich-001395>

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