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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2005

## Wall Street Journal Vying With LA Times For Worst Guckert Coverage

by Michael in New York on [2/25/2005 12:49:00 PM](#)

Thanks to tizzie for pointing us to this [Wall Street Journal article today about James Guckert](#). It continues the LA Times angle that this is a case of old media versus new media and who gets to decide what constitutes a real journalist. Again, not ONE quote from a source who argues that Guckert was indeed a fake journalist and that this is a serious issue about national security and the manipulation of the media by the White House.

"The fact is that the history and tradition of the White House have been much more open and accepting" of nonmainstream journalists than other Washington institutions, such as the Congress, says Ari Fleischer, Mr. McClellan's predecessor to the Wall Street Journal. "I think it would be a real shame if that tradition ended. It might be good for the press secretary but not for diversity of opinion."

The story is filled with offbeat reporters who also attend the White House press conferences, though it doesn't make clear whether they all get repeated day passes or have hard passes which demand a security check -- the very security check James Guckert would have failed.

This isn't about his anti-gay, far right politics. If Rush Limbaugh and Maureen Dowd applied for a day pass to the White House press room, they both would deserve to get one.

But, again, this is not old media versus new media or about the difficulty of figuring out what constitutes a real journalist.

James Guckert aka Jeff Gannon received a day pass to the White House press room before he'd ever written a single article for any news media outlet of any sort in the entire world. He wasn't even affiliated with any media outlet -- real of imaginary -- when he received a day pass as a reporter to the White House. I think if you're going to draw the line somewhere, that seems a pretty good place to start.

Yes, a few weeks later, GOPUSA.COM set up the fake news website Talonnews.com and yes, eventually their "volunteer" reporter James Guckert started getting paid half wages because even fake journalists have to get paid something in order to get press passes. But slowly building up a front over the years doesn't change the fact that James Guckert was allowed into the White House press room when NO ONE under any conceivable standard could consider him a journalist.



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