

## NewsRoom

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Section: A

### Mainstream Media Misstep

Mainstream Media Misstep Poor coverage of gunman's attack on Family Research Council is yet another example of bias in the fourth estate Last Wednesday morning, Floyd Lee Corkins II, 28, walked into the lobby of the Washington, D.C., headquarters of the Family Research Council, the conservative Christian group organized by Dr. James Dobson in the 1980s. According to media reports, Corkins carried a backpack that contained a pistol, extra ammunition and 15 Chick-fil-A sandwiches. That is, if you can find the media reports. Most of the "mainstream" media have minimized, or altogether ignored, the shooting. Why? This story is but the latest glaring example of "media bias," which is now so common a term that I wonder how many people just shrug and move on. Sort of like President Obama's miserable record in office, the media's heavy left slant has now been so frequently pointed out, with clear evidence, that it becomes background noise - something that is either factored in to the way stories are reported or used as an excuse for people not to be informed as to the true state of our country. Here are some facts about the Family Research Council shooting that should be reported, and would be if the circumstances were the opposite of what they are. According to reports, after the security guard would not let Corkins enter the FRC offices, Corkins opened fire, shooting the guard in the arm, and telling him: "I don't like your politics." Corkins has been an activist for gay and lesbian causes, volunteering for groups with like views. Corkins apparently posed as an intern, or someone applying for a position, and thankfully the guard did not buy the ruse. It appears that Corkins intended to kill as many people as he could, leaving a Chick-fil-A sandwich as a "calling card" for each of his victims. Police said the guard, Leo Johnson, managed to subdue Corkins after he shot Johnson in the arm. Corkins has been charged with assault with intent to kill. The shooting is being investigated as an incident of domestic terrorism. Rightly so, but I bet you've heard little about it. Here is a premeditated crime, "with intent to kill," targeting a group that is explicitly Judeo-Christian in its mission and views, explicitly because the gunman "doesn't like their politics." And yet, the nightly news channels barely gave the story any coverage. CNN was too busy reporting on Chelsea Clinton appearing in Vogue to break in with such "breaking news." A Washington Post blog entry from Aug. 20, by a lesbian clergy member, was more an apologia for gay rights and gun control than it was a defense of the Family Research Council. Can anyone seriously debate that, if the roles were reversed, the media would be covering the "hate-filled conservatives" 24/7? Well, they are sort of doing that anyway: The Southern Poverty Law Center, a group that never found a cause celebre too liberal to embrace, had labeled the Family Research Council a "hate group" for its traditional values stances (it had similarly tagged Chick-fil-A). Much of the media reporting of the shooting has dutifully echoed the "hate group" designation in their stories, meaning that a perfectly legitimate Christian organization is both targeted by a radical left gunman and smeared as a hate group in the press. Nicely done. So tell us something we don't already know, you say. They've been biased for years. The country needs a rigorous "fourth estate" in a free press. Not a biased press, or a discredited one. We now largely have both. The media, and the viewers/listeners/readers, are not even pretending anymore. Conservatives go to Fox News. Liberals go ... pretty much everywhere else. And the news is an increasingly discredited business. Just ask CNN or MSNBC about their ratings. The mainstream media have been a willing lapdog for the Obama administration, in some cases taking headlines and content directly from White House operatives. In so doing, they have frittered away precious credibility. It's not just how they slant stories; it's

also what they choose not to report. We have reached a perilous point, when the media face a jaded public made all the more cynical by media bias. Many simply will just not listen anymore. That neuters the media's critical role, to speak truth to power and check that power through freedom of the press. In short order, the press' freedom will be as besieged as the freedoms the Family Research Council is attempting to exercise. And as underreported, **Cory T. Wilson** of Madison is an attorney. His email address is [cory@corywilson.ms](mailto:cory@corywilson.ms). It's not just how the mainstream media slant stories; it's also what they choose not to report. We have reached a perilous point ... Many simply will just not listen anymore. That neuters the media's critical role, to speak truth to power and check that power through freedom of the press.

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