

Organic Corporation Shill At Mother Jones Thinks Corporate Sponsors Control Hockey Games



By Hank Campbell — June 6, 2016

While watching the Stanley Cup match on Saturday, the first period ended and legendary sportscaster Bob Costas appeared on the screen with the Lexus Intermission Report. It made me chuckle because the day before, a blogger at the political website *Mother Jones* had asked me on Twitter what I thought of a new EPA paper on the herbicide atrazine.

Be interested to hear thoughts on EPA atrazine report from [@HankCampbell](#)^[1] and [@JonEntine](#)^[2] <https://t.co/5XGVg0iR7V>^[3]

— Tom Philpott ([@tomphilpott](#)) [June 3, 2016](#)^[4]

Twitter is a quick medium, 140 characters, so I replied he should ask either EPA or the maker of the pesticide. To rational people, this makes sense. The EPA's career scientists have produced some of the best pesticide papers in the world and Syngenta employs world-class scientists of their own. I have only written about atrazine a few times in over 1,000 articles and 10 years, so I can hardly be considered an expert compared to them. Why ask me? The answer became obvious with his response - he had no interest in science or context, he was just looking for an excuse to engage in political grandstanding. He smarmily replied

Classic. Forget the EPA; just go ask [@Syngenta](#)^[5]. Sure, why not? <https://t.co/Pjyzo48WC0>^[6] <https://t.co/S5k86M7N4g>^[7] — Tom Philpott ([@tomphilpott](#)) [June 3, 2016](#)^[8]

Well, of course he should ask them. The weird thing is that he believes it would be legitimate to ask anyone else. I replied and told him what all of you know is obvious, by way of an analogy; if you want to know about the weakness of an Intel processor, you go ask AMD, not Intel, and certainly not me. If there are flaws in the EPA's paper or gaps in the studies they selected for their analysis, the obvious way to find them is to ask the manufacturer. That is Journalism 101.

Obviously, he did not want to engage in journalism, he wanted to engage in political posturing. But to what avail? Does he really think I have somehow controlled the EPA since 1958, when they registered the product, and they just broke free and I would be upset? Does he think a small, unrestricted grant (.009 of our revenue last year) from a company allows us to buy some special kind of clout for them with EPA, or a corporation can buy some special clout with us?

It's batty.

I wondered, watching the hockey game and that intermission report, if *Mother Jones* similarly believes Bob Costas is rigging the score of the hockey game to be whatever outcome Lexus wants. Because, you know, Lexus sponsors his report and the network that pays him proudly lists Lexus right on the screen. Just like non-profits do with sponsors all of the time. That is the mentality of the kooky fringe - they believe if you accept a donation, you must be involved in *quid pro quo* and producing a result they dictate. Is Bob Costas in a vast web of conspiracy to control sports? If so, I want to know if the CEO of Lexus is a San Jose or a Pittsburgh fan, because I can stop watching right now if they have told Costas to make sure the Sharks win.

Ridiculous, of course, but psychologically, it speaks to a malady among anti-science activists. Good-hearted people believe other people are also essentially good, while pickpockets watch their wallets better than anyone **(1)** - so what does it tell us about writers at *Mother Jones* that they assume Bob Costas must be manipulating scores of hockey games, or that if we take an unrestricted grant from a corporation we must be spinning science results to please them? Why doesn't this *Mother Jones* blogger know that *Mother Jones*, United Way, American Heart Association, and every other non-profit will take donations from anyone who will send them? And does?

Because the foundation that launders money for *Mother Jones* makes sure *he* never sees their donor list. **(2)** Unlike us, they are not transparent with their staff.

[On their last available Form 990](#) ^[9], the Foundation for National Progress had ~\$13,000,000 in revenue. A subscription to *Mother Jones* magazine [costs \\$12](#) ^[10]. They have [just under 167,000 subscribers](#) ^[11]. That's around \$2,000,000 in subscription revenue, leaving a difference of about \$11,000,000, a whopping **~84 percent of their revenue, as dark money**. Where does that 84 percent of their revenue come from, then? Obviously corporations and [certainly political activists like George Soros](#) ^[12]. So what? Why don't we use that to smear *Mother Jones* writers? For the same reason I don't think everyone is out to pick my pocket. I have never been paid to produce a specific result so I don't assume all employees at *Mother Jones* are. **(3)**

Anyway, in case it remains unclear; no, *Mother Jones* employees, Bob Costas is not a shill for Big Lexus, nor is he manipulating the score of hockey games, no matter what Vast Corporate Conspiracy you choose to believe about scientists. And even less believable is that any of us at the American Council on Science and Health manufacture articles that are false because anyone paid us to do so.

If you want to read our recent peer-reviewed publications, free of charge, because that is actually what donors want us to do...

Does 'Excess' Dietary Salt Cause Cardiovascular Toxicity? [13]

Concussions: Fact v. Fiction [14]

The Name Game: How Unethical Environmental Groups and Toxic Fanatics Scare You With Words [15]

And more to come this year. If only Mother Jones used its millions of dollars so constructively, rather than paying employees to engage in social media smear campaigns.

NOTES:

(1) An old legal joke. A man accused of being a cutpurse was asked by a judge if he wanted a trial by judge or by a jury of his peers. "You, judge," the man replied, "I don't want 12 pickpockets deciding what happens to me."

(2) They're not dummies. They know if they fire him, he might quickly steal the documents they gave him access to and send them to a magazine who will write a hit piece about the funding of Mother Jones and how their content correlates to their sources of revenue. It's clearly safer not to be transparent about funding, like Mother Jones, than to be open about it, like we are.

(3) Though he may be. A Freedom of Information Act request revealed that organic corporate

marketing groups [routinely call on him to promote their message against competitors](#) [16]:



Unsurprisingly, real journalists were not giving him a free pass when he ridiculed the notion that he

had been bought off, though he persistently claims everyone else has been:



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Source URL: <https://www.acsh.org/news/2016/06/06/no-mother-jones-lexus-does-not-control-hockey-game-scores>

Links

[1] <https://twitter.com/HankCampbell>

[2] <https://twitter.com/JonEntine>

[3] <https://t.co/5XGVg0iR7V>

[4] <https://twitter.com/tomphilpott/status/738799473644576769>

[5] <https://twitter.com/Syngenta>

[6] <https://t.co/Pjyzo48WC0>

[7] <https://t.co/S5k86M7N4g>

[8] <https://twitter.com/tomphilpott/status/738808943271510016>

[9] http://990s.foundationcenter.org/990_pdf_archive/942/942282759/942282759_201406_990.pdf

[10] <http://www.motherjones.com/about/subscriptions/customer-service>

[11] <http://www.motherjones.com/about/advertising/mother-jones-magazine-print>

[12] <http://www.mrc.org/articles/soros-backs-new-progressive-agenda-159-million?source=acsh.org>

[13] <http://acsh.org/news/2016/02/26/how-toxic-is-salt/>

[14] <http://acsh.org/news/2016/03/27/concussions-fact-v-fiction/>

[15] <http://acsh.org/news/2016/05/27/the-name-game-how-unethical-environmental-groups-and-toxic-fanatics-scare-you-with-words/>

[16] http://www.science20.com/science_20/mother_jones_hates_scientists_and_their_bias_shows-157416