

PROPUBLICA: THE ATTACK ARM OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

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ProPublica boasts that it's a straight-down-the-middle muckraker working to "expose abuses of power and betrayals of the public trust." In reality, that couldn't be anything further from the truth.

From its founding, to the recent smear campaign against Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, to an ever-growing mountain of articles slanted against conservative values, it's all too clear that ProPublica has slowly morphed into the attack arm of the Democrat Party—a role it was arguably created to serve.

A simple examination of ProPublica's history and donors is enough to demonstrate that the group has always been an undercover, left-leaning publication; but to remove all doubt, Restoration News reviewed over 700 articles written between 2022 and 2023 to discover just how biased they really are.

The results are shocking for a newsroom that claims to be "unbiased," but they corroborate the conclusion that many have already reached: ProPublica disproportionately attacks conservative and Republican values—all at the whim of its wealthy, ideologically driven donors on the Left.

The worst part is, this news organization frames its work to seem neutral and unbiased while touting "nothing but the facts, ma'am" journalism through its publishing partners across the nation.

We make no secret that our objective is to equip conservatives for the battlefield of America's information war with the "progressive" Left. We arm ourselves with the truth. In that light, we recognize that some of ProPublica's reporting is fair and balanced, and appreciate that the group provides an important service in publishing thousands of IRS non-profit tax forms for free on its website every year—one which is helpful for investigative journalists studying how our nonprofits are abused by ideologues for partisan gain.

Yet a few useful services cannot outweigh the biases of ProPublica nor the damage it's wrought to the conservative movement. It's time for ProPublica to be honest and upfront with its readers and publishing partners about just where it stands in service to the Left's increasingly radical political agenda, so the American people can make up their minds.

Uncovering the Bias

The bulk of ProPublica's reporting, roughly two-thirds, is not political, and we won't pretend that it is. But the remaining content is political and overwhelmingly favors the Left while attacking conservatives.

Here is our evidence:

Following an extensive review of over 700 articles (published between January 2022 and September 2023), Restoration News found ProPublica is 23 times more likely to attack conservatives than the Left.

Of the 716 articles reviewed, 242 were politically slanted, with a large disparity between anti-liberal and anti-leftist pieces. In total, 232 were anti-conservative and 10 were anti-left.

That's just the beginning. A careful inspection of ProPublica's content-producing staff revealed the same bias, as the majority of employees who had declared a party were registered Democrats. In a review of 65 staff members (editors and reporters), Restoration News found that—of the 35 where political affiliation could be established—27 were registered as Democrats to a meager 3 registered Republicans.

It's a "credible" tool used to promote leftist ideas on the front page of newspapers across the nation—a surprisingly easy feat considering ProPublica has hundreds of publishing partners around the nation that label the publication as "unbiased," or often leave them unlabeled.

Consider that ProPublica is often characterized as a nonprofit "watchdog" rather than as a partisan group by left-leaning and "mainstream" publications, if it's characterized at all. Contrast that with these same publications' treatment of conservative groups as biased, partisan, or ideologically motivated. That's a credibility it doesn't deserve.

Smear the Supreme Court

There's no better example of ProPublica's role in advancing the Left's agenda than its smear campaign against Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas—part of a larger campaign to take over the nation's highest court by forcing out its conservative members or packing the court with reliable "progressives."

ProPublica launched its first salvo in April 2023, with an assault on Thomas that alleged he'd violated the eth-

ics laws by vacationing with longtime friend and billionaire Harlan Crow, according to ProPublica's "ethical experts." The publication called into question the pair's lavish yacht trips and luxury resorts, which Thomas had failed to properly disclose. The Wall Street Journal editorial board was among the first to push back against the growing narrative, slamming ProPublica for making unsubstantiated claims clothed in suggestive rhetoric:

“ The piece is loaded with words and phrases intended to convey that this is all somehow disreputable: “superyacht”; “luxury trips”; “exclusive California all-male retreat”; “sprawling ranch”; “private chefs”; “elegant accommodation”; “opulent lodge”; “lavishing the justice with gifts.” And more. Adjectival overkill is the method of bad polemicists who don't have much to report. ”

Despite the opinions presented in ProPublica's report—many from organizations that also donate to ProPublica and other groups that continually target Thomas—legal experts across the nation began to weigh in on the claim with dissenting opinions.

“Justice Thomas' critics cannot convince the public that his approach to judging or his individual decisions are legally incorrect, so they and their media enablers drop innuendos and incomplete information, hoping...that uninformed people will assume the worst,” said Thomas Jip-

ping, senior legal fellow for Heritage Foundation's Edwin Meese III Center for Legal and Judicial Studies.

The following month, ProPublica doubled down on its claims, accusing Thomas of hiding his grandson's tuition, which Crow had paid for.

Crow defended his generosity by pointing out that he's always been passionate about quality education and has sponsored many children's educations before. “It's disappointing that those with partisan political interests would try to turn helping at-risk youth with tuition assistance into something nefarious or political,” he said.

But Crow wasn't the real target. ProPublica further savaged Thomas for a 2014 real estate deal with Crow 2014 in which Crow's company bought a string of properties from Thomas, his mother, and his late brother's family for \$133,363 (hardly a fortune).

According to Crow, he'd purchased the properties with the intent of turning them into a public museum that highlights Thomas' compelling life story. Thomas later announced that he would amend his disclosure to include the real estate deal, but noted he did not initially think to include them, as he didn't profit on the sale.

“With each new hit piece, the Left is revealing its true motive: to impugn Justice Thomas by any means necessary, no matter how ridiculous the charge,” said Carrie Severino, Judicial Crisis Network president and former clerk to Justice Thomas.

Thomas's relationship with Crow is longstanding, and many things such



Credit: www.propublica.org

For over 20 years, Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas has been treated to luxury vacations by billionaire Republican donor Harlan Crow.

ProPublica's smear campaign against Justice Clarence Thomas

as personal stays in friends' homes are not required to be disclosed, according to Jipping. Furthermore, the tuition from Thomas's grandson was given to the school and not to Thomas personally, while the real estate deal with Crow—supposedly proof of crooked deals with a wealthy Republican donor—actually proved a financial loss for Thomas.

In fact, if the Thomas investigation confirmed anything it's that ProPublica is a blatantly left-wing publication.

To date, ProPublica has released a stunning eight investigations into Thomas. In each case it's the same story: Attacking the credibility of the Supreme Court while turning a blind eye to any misdeeds by the court's "progressive" justices.

Founded and Funded by Lefty Money

When looking at an organization's bias, it is important to see who is paying its bills. Donors and their preferred politics help show how an organization operates, but looking at the web of leftist money and the

initiatives they chase paints a damning picture for ProPublica. Interesting enough, but not surprising at all, many of ProPublica's donors have vested interests in "grassroots" organizations that demonize Thomas and attack the courts.

Is it too far to assume that the financial leaders of ProPublica would use the organization to bring credibility to their smaller, special interest attacks? Not at all.

The Sandler Foundation, a project of Herbert and Marion Sandler, who "instituted borrowing practices that were largely blamed for the housing market collapse," is the largest founding donor to ProPublica. The foundation, which accounts for 20 percent of all ProPublica's donations, has given roughly \$50 million to ProPublica since 2010 for "general purposes."

The Sandler Foundation also donates to litany of other left-leaning organizations and has given nearly \$1 billion in grants since 2006.

The group backs the left-of-center policy think tank the Center for

American Progress (the Left's Heritage Foundation knock-off), which supports abortion, LGBTQ advocacy, increasing the minimum wage, climate alarmism, gun control and illegal immigration. The Sandler Foundation provided the group with \$2.3 million in startup money and later provided another \$4 million in contributions.

In 2019, the Sandler Foundation also delved into "dark money," donating \$500,000 to the New Venture Fund (NVF), part of the multi-billion-dollar "dark money" activist network run by the D.C. consultancy Arabella Advisors. Those funds were funneled on to Demand Justice, the Arabella spin-off responsible for creating the Left's court-packing scheme and savaging Justice Clarence Thomas.

Since 2016, the left-leaning Marisla Foundation has given over \$2 million to ProPublica and roughly \$1 million to the Center for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW). CREW is a legal advocacy group connected to Republican-turned-Democrat strategist



● Boston Foundation Inc \$1,353,600	● The William & Flora Hewlett Foundation \$2,475,000	● Laura and John Arnold Foundation \$8,078,613
● American Online Giving Foundation \$1,368,934	● Schwab Charitable Fund \$3,143,698	● Silicon Valley Community Foundation \$8,524,556
● San Francisco Foundation \$1,450,000	● The Hollyhock Foundation Inc \$3,189,000	● The Kate McGrath & J.J. Abrams Family Foundation \$10,025,000
● Stephen M Silberstein Foundation \$1,550,000	● Democracy Fund Inc \$3,700,000	● John D and Catherine T McArthur Foundation Consolidated \$10,602,525
● The Dyson Foundation \$1,625,000	● Crankstart Foundation \$4,258,750	● John S. and James L. Knight Foundation \$13,414,234
● Craig Newmark Foundation \$2,000,000	● Abrams Foundation Inc \$4,350,000	● The Ford Foundation \$15,475,455
● West K Kellogg Foundation \$2,000,070	● The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation \$4,925,950	● Fidelity Investments Charitable Gift Fund \$17,539,780
● Foundation to Promote Open Society \$1,140,000	● Yellow Chair Foundation \$5,650,000	● The Pew Charitable Trust \$20,522,526
		● Sandler Foundation \$48,750,000

David Brock’s partisan Super PAC American Bridge 21st Century. CREW has worked to remove Thomas from his position, and in April 2023, filed a civil and criminal complaint against the justice.

The Sandler Foundation has donated \$7.5 million to the left-leaning Campaign Legal Center (CLC) since 2015. The group, also funded by Pew Charitable Trusts and billionaire leftist George Soros, focuses on strict enforcement of campaign finance laws. The group received \$2.5 million in donations from crypto-based entrepreneur Sam Bankman-Fried, who is now charged with wire fraud and conspiracy following crypto-currency company FTX filing for bankruptcy in November 2022.

Notably, the Foundation to Promote Open Society, one of the philanthropies of arch-“progressive” George Soros, has given over \$3 million to ProPublica. The group has also donated \$2.7 million to CLC and \$2.5 million to CREW since 2011. The Silicon Valley Community Foundation gave \$8 million to ProPublica, while also donating \$60,000 to CLC and \$252,200 to CREW since 2014.

In April 2023, CLC wrote a letter requesting that the Judicial Conference refer Thomas to the Department of Justice (DOJ) “for potential criminal and civil penalties related to violating the Ethics in Government Act.”

Alongside CLC, the Sandler foundation has donated to the left-leaning American Constitution Society (ACS) for “general support,” giving nearly \$6 million since 2010, a far-left group described as the Left’s answer to the Federalist Society. ACS is closely associated with the Democracy Alliance, a network of top left-wing funders who meet annually to coordinate their political spending—making ACS a key weapon in the Left’s arsenal. No wonder it’s heavily funded by the Tides Foundation and George Soros’ Open Society Foundations.

To no surprise, ProPublica’s attack on Thomas includes quotes from both ACS and CLC. It is interesting to see numerous groups that receive funding from the Sandler Foundation, and other interconnected lefty groups, working together to target Thomas. But ProPublica is “unbiased”, and this is all circumstantial, right?

“If Justice Thomas received free travel on private planes and yachts, failure to report the gifts is a violation of the disclosure law,” said Kedric Payne, senior director for ethics at the nonprofit government watchdog Campaign Legal Center.

“It’s incomprehensible to me that someone would do this,” said Nancy Gertner.

ProPublica labeled Gartner as “a retired federal judge appointed by President Bill Clinton,” seemingly forgetting to list that she sits on ACS’s board.

Payne also frequently testifies on Supreme Court ethics and testified on the issue against Thomas as a Democrat in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee hearing in May. At \$20 million, the Pew Charitable Trusts is ProPublica’s second largest donor, one of the Left’s top mega-funders created in 2003.

Despite its conservative origins, Pew now backs many leftist causes, including climate alarmism. Pew regularly funds environmentalist groups that oppose oil drilling in the U.S. Canada. It also funds the New Voters Project, a front by the liberal Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs) to register new Democratic voters.

We’ve also traced \$15 million to ProPublica from the Ford Foundation, one of the Left’s biggest mega-funders responsible for funding virtually every “progressive” group in America. Ford has a nefarious history of collaborating with the Rockefeller Foundation to fund population control measures in the U.S. and poor countries, including India. It is estimated that the foundation spent nearly \$150 million on birth control programs between 1958-1983.

Today it continues that legacy by funding abortion-on-demand groups, including Catholics for Choice, the International Planned Parenthood Federation, and the International Women’s Health Coalition. Ford also focuses on bankrolling “equitable development, gender, racial, and ethnic justice, and inclusive economies.”

Pushing Left

Another political figure the publication relentlessly targets is former president Donald Trump. ProPublica has targeted Trump while claiming that he “built the national debt so big” and wields information as “power” in a nefarious way.

Other reports target parents who wish to remove sexually explicit and LGBTQ books from the libraries of small children or demonize parents for casting out Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives.

ProPublica also takes a close look at very wealthy Americans and often writes reports that are anti-wealth and pro-tax—unless you’re a donor. The group released a recent report that exposed the tax habits of billionaires in America yet failed to include its own largest donors.

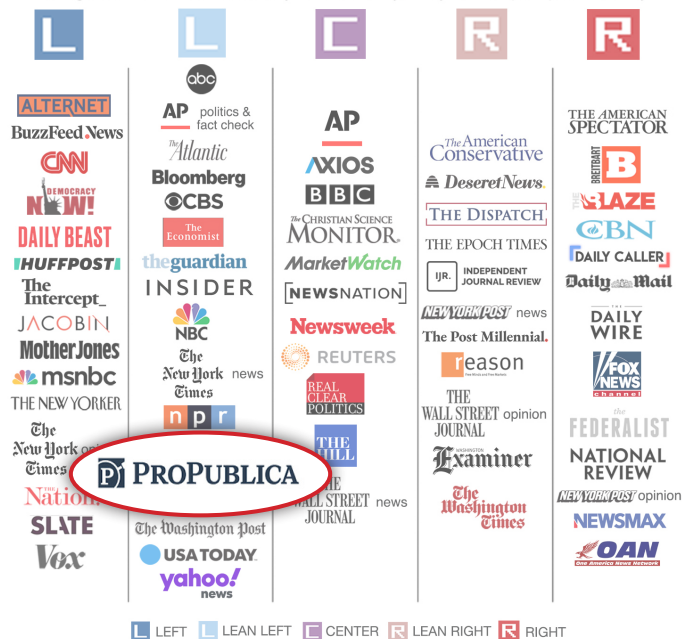
In 2020, AllSides, an organization that provides balanced news ratings, designated the publication as “lean[s]-left.”

“ProPublica’s ‘Zero Tolerance’ section on President Trump’s immigration policy included mostly pieces about children being separated from their families at the border, with no right-wing perspectives on the policy to be found. ProPublica’s Politics section includes mostly pieces critical of or investigating right-wing leaders, and few pieces on left-wing politicians,” the group wrote.

Following ProPublica’s attack on Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas in 2023, AllSides renewed the “lean-left” rating with “strong” confidence. The group concluded that ProPublica focuses “mainly on issues of importance to the political left, such as abortion rights and taxing the rich, and sometimes frames conservative causes negatively.”

AllSides™ Media Bias Chart™

All ratings are based on online content only — not TV, print, or radio content. Ratings do not reflect accuracy or credibility; they reflect perspective only.



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Credit: www.allides.com

Admit the Truth

None of this should surprise anyone who's followed the country's bitter information war. For decades, Democrats and their activist allies have controlled major media institutions, shaping the political narrative—and the unfolding agenda in Washington—to favor the Left.

What's clear from ProPublica's origins is that it was always intended to be the attack arm of the Democratic Party, helping "progressives" fight the culture war to fundamentally transform America. Conservatives already know that the mainstream media is biased; it's time to add ProPublica to the list of unfair, partisan media outlets to tune out. End the "unbiased" charade.

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