

IT'S "REAL" NEWS NOT "F_____" NEWS

[Scott Thuman](#), Chief Political Correspondent for [WJLA](#) Washington, DC and the Sinclair Broadcasting Group is confident about the state of the "real" news business, seriously. [Doug Simon](#) spoke with [Scott Thuman](#), Chief Political Correspondent for [WJLA](#) in Washington, DC and the [Sinclair Broadcasting Group](#) at the [PR Summit DC](#) about news and journalism in today's political climate.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/A1p0Fk5fg0I>

He feels media should stop using the term "fake" news. Who are we to argue?**INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT DOUG SIMON:** I'm Doug Simon from D S Simon Media. We're at PR Summit DC, I'm with Scott Thuman, Chief Political correspondent for WJLA in Washington DC who just gave a terrific presentation. Thanks for being with us.

SCOTT THUMAN: Thank you, Doug. I appreciate it.

DOUG SIMON: Great, so we're going to talk about real news, which you're a big pioneer of and fan of. Why real news?

SCOTT THUMAN: Well, I think that at a time that we're seeing right now, journalism under assault, and I don't just mean that politically. I mean people are questioning everything the media does. It's highly valuable that we be accurate, that we be thorough and not knee jerk. The media, where it does fault, is trying to report things too quickly and sometimes, with an attitude.

And I believe that we should be agenda-free reporting. Make it impersonal so that we're just going after the story, just after the fact, and make sure that we service the viewer the best way they deserve. I mean the viewers are smart people,

the readers are smart people. Present them the facts and let them decide.

DOUG SIMON: You expressed an optimism about the future of journalism, which was very refreshing, in the covering environment. You also feel it's OK for journalists to be under siege, that's part of fair game.

SCOTT THUMAN: Absolutely, a lot of people are saying, is journalism dying? Or the freedom of press, the freedom of speech, are they under assault? Listen, are they being more scrutinized and put under a more intense microscope these days? Absolutely, but I would argue that there are more reporters who are working harder, longer hours, and more aggressively than there were four, five, six, seven, eight years ago. And as a result, I think that journalism is strong.

Are there some bad elements out there that need to be weeded out? Sure, but it doesn't by any scope indicate that journalism is on its way out. In fact, I think we're in a position to be stronger and better than ever.

DOUG SIMON: And there's a lot of evidence out there there's actually more interest in journalism, more people subscribing to the New York Times, Washington Post, watching political news on TV.

SCOTT THUMAN: Sure, it's vital right now that people feel that they are getting the best and most up-to-date information because we are in critical times. And that's not a political statement about this administration or any other, internationally and nationally.

There are so many moving parts right now, and all of them with significant impact on how we live our daily lives. So it's incumbent upon us to provide it but you're right, there is a stronger appetite from the average person to know what's going on. And you need to be there at the forefront to deliver what they feel is trustworthy and responsible reporting.

DOUG SIMON: All right, and last short topic area, since our audience is communicators. They want to do their jobs better. So many issues cover your beat now, health care, environment, transportation, energy, you name it. Someone wants to reach out to you, what's their best chance of getting you to look at covering their story?

SCOTT THUMAN: It's not as hard as people think. Everyone feels it's daunting, I'm not going to reach out to this reporter directly, who has these responsibilities. I mean I work for a company with 82 newsrooms, 150 television stations across the country, yet I still look at my inbox like everyone else. So if I'm getting e-mails or pitches about a story that's relevant that day like you said, about transportation.

Say that day, I get assigned something about the infrastructure bill going through Congress and I need to personalize it, or I need to localize it or find someone to talk about it. I'm going to go through that inbox. I'm going to search those words, find e-mails that I got from a company, like yours or anyone else's who's saying, hey, I've got someone great for you to talk to on this subject.

And I'm going to reach directly out to them, and maybe an hour later, we're doing an interview, whether it's in person or on Skype. So there are certainly plenty of misnomers that you can't reach out directly to that reporter and get access and be on TV that night with quality reporting. And they're wrong, you can reach right out to us directly.

DOUG SIMON: Scott, in real life, has climbed Mount Kilimanjaro. Turning news into real news might be his Mt. Everest, and I hope you're successful with it.

SCOTT THUMAN: Thank you very much. I hope so and I'll keep climbing.