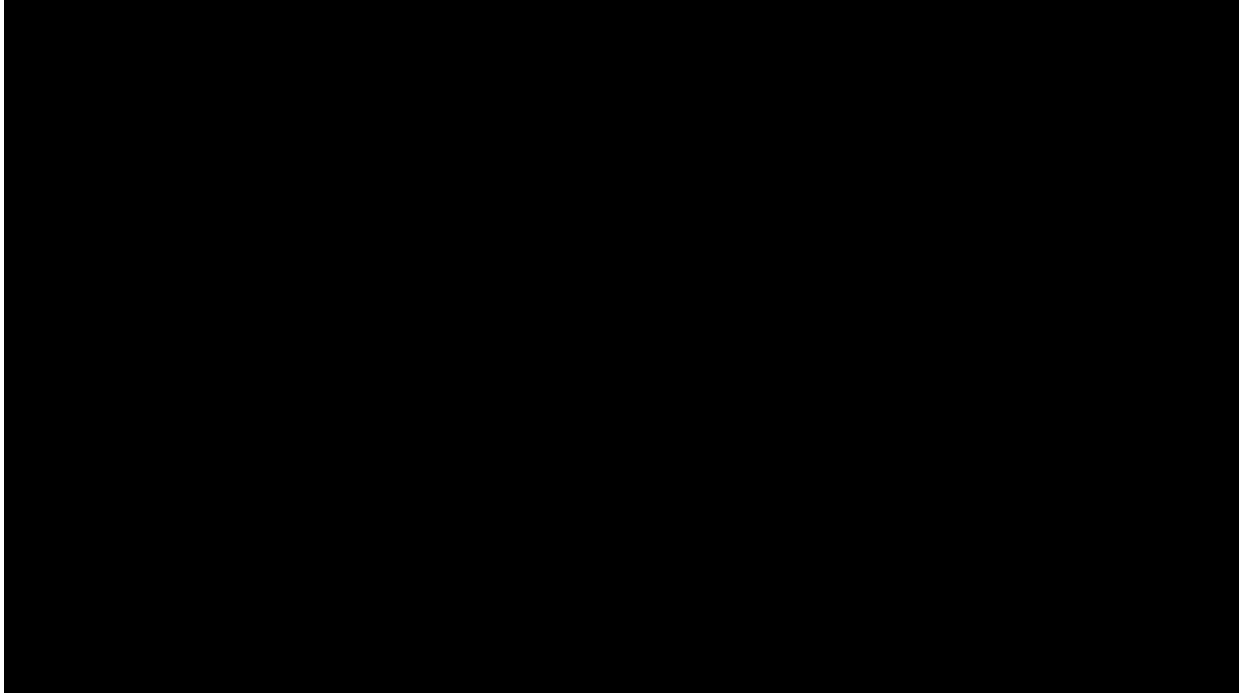
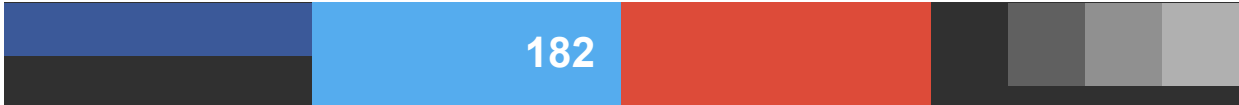


MEDIA

NEW YORK CITY, NY -10 JUN 2017- Completed in 2007, the New York Times Building is a skyscraper designed by Renzo Piano located in midtown Manhattan in New York City. (Photo via Shutterstock)

EXCLUSIVE: New York Times Executive Editor Calls NYT Opinion Page ‘Far Left Wing’

 **JOE SIMONSON**
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The New York Times executive editor Dean Baquet labeled the paper’s opinion page as “far left wing” and defended the hiring of columnist Bret Stephens, during a private meeting with members of Stanford University’s

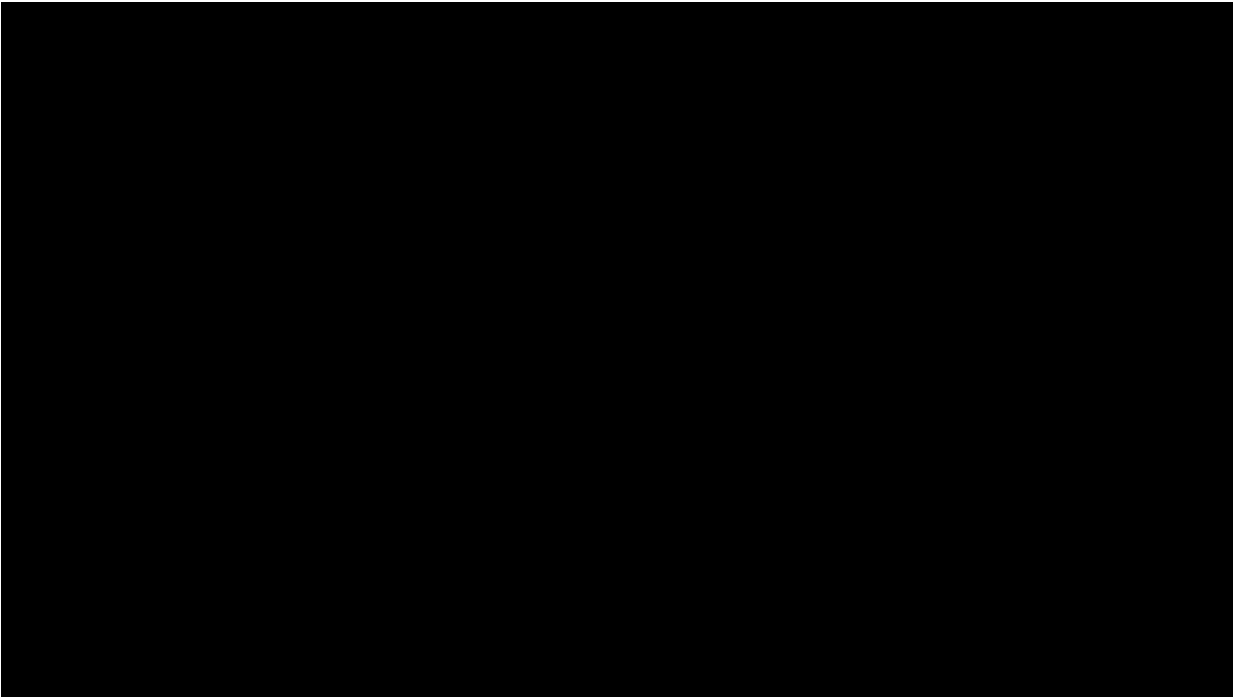


Baquet addressed the staff of The Stanford Daily before his scheduled public event Tuesday night. One student who does not work for the paper, Elliot Kaufman, snuck in and took notes before giving exclusive access to The Daily Caller News Foundation.

When an attendee raised the topic of journalism in the age of President Donald Trump, Baquet discussed the controversial hiring of Stephens — a self-identified “conservative” and former Wall Street Journal opinion writer.

“We already have a far left wing opinion page,” said Baquet before explaining why he thought the paper could hire someone like Stephens without fundamentally altering the section’s partisan bent.

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Institute shares with Stanford and called it “probably the most reputable conservative think tank.”

“If the Hoover Institute was at [the University of California, Berkeley], they’d burn it down,” he added. “If it was at Columbia [University], they might burn it down.”

According to Kaufman’s notes, it is clear that Baquet has been digesting the number of criticisms — both from readers and even internally among other Times employees — that have been lobbed his way since assuming his position in 2014.

“The New York Times’ job is not to be the opposition to Trump.” If that were the case, he asked, “what would we do when the opposition eventually wins?” before suggesting they would just be the Democratic Party’s lackeys and not journalists.

Over roughly the last 12 months, the paper’s opinion section has been a lightning rod for criticism under the leadership of editorial page editor James Bennet. The hiring of Stephens, a so-called intellectual diversity hire to give conservatives another voice in the Gray Lady, despite the fact that Stephens has called for a full repeal of the Second Amendment.

Opinion editor Bari Weiss has also attracted nearly unprecedented scrutiny, not only for her decisions to occasionally run columns written by conservatives, but also because of her conduct on [Twitter](#).

One potential columnist, Quinn Norton, was fired mere hours after the

years-old tweets that some criticized as racist.

During a meeting with some Times employees in December, Bennet tried to explain the page's recent changes. They did not seem pleased, [Huffington Post](#) reported.

“People were not satisfied with his answers,” one staffer told HuffPost. “Since his answers were equivocal bullshit that didn’t really address that the opinion section abuses fact and elevates white male conservative voices under the guise of ‘diversity of thought.’ And that he admits to making mistakes without any concern or even acknowledgement of what the consequences of those ‘mistakes’ actually are.”