# White House lays into New York Times over use of pronouns... because that's more important than Ukraine



In a recent email, Steven Cheung, the White House communications director, expressed dissatisfaction with the reporting practices of The New York Times, arguing that the publication’s focus on pronouns overshadowed its commitment to journalistic truth. Because to do both would be impossible, presumably.

“If The New York Times spent the same amount of time actually reporting the truth as they do being obsessed with pronouns," he say, "maybe they would be a half-decent publication.” This remark reflects the ongoing tensions between the current administration and media outlets, particularly regarding issues related to gender identity.

The controversy appeared to extend beyond The New York Times as Matt Berg, a reporter at Crooked Media, launched an experiment in mid-February, prompted by discussions with another journalist who experienced similar responses when using pronouns in communication. Typically omitting pronouns from his correspondence, Berg included “(he/him)” in an email directed to a press officer inquiring about the administration’s stance on Ukraine. He reported receiving a reply that mirrored his initial question, further igniting his disbelief. “I find it baffling that they care more about pronouns than giving journalists accurate information, but here we are,” he commented in a subsequent email to The Times.

The Trump administration has prioritised issues surrounding transgender individuals in its early policy initiatives. On his first day in office, President Trump signed an executive order designating only male and female sexes, which has raised alarms within the LGBTQ+ community and sparked significant debate about rights and recognitions. Following this, the administration implemented various policies that restrict transgender individuals from military service, prevent transgender girls and women from participating in female sports, and retract certain protections under anti-discrimination laws. Numerous aspects of these policies are currently facing legal scrutiny.

A spokesperson for The New York Times commented on this situation, stating, “Evading tough questions certainly runs counter to transparent engagement with free and independent press reporting. But refusing to answer a straightforward request to explain the administration’s policies because of the formatting of an email signature is both a concerning and baffling choice, especially from the highest press office in the U.S. government.”

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/feat/archives/2019/11/19/2003726102> - This article discusses the trend of choosing personal pronouns in progressive America, reflecting broader societal debates around gender identity, which aligns with the controversy over media focus on pronouns versus policy issues.
* <https://benryan.substack.com/p/why-i-use-trans-peoples-preferred/comments> - Though the full content of this link is not available without subscription, it generally addresses the importance of using preferred pronouns, a topic central to the discussion on gender identity and media practices.