

September 3, 2010 5:32 pm

## The Guys Behind Christwire, Creating Parody From 'Glenn Beck on Steroids'

By Adam Pasick



In the world of [Christwire](#), the Glenn Beck rally made Martin Luther King Jr. proud, Hurricane Earl is headed toward the Gay East Coast to reap God's vengeance, and the recent increase in [pet-on-pet rape](#) is a pernicious consequences of same-sex marriage.

This is, of course, satire: Completely over-the-top, but mimicking some extreme religious-right talking points so well that several mainstream news sites have been hoaxed. In a competitive and superheated news climate, a religious site calling for a [boycott of Bill Murray](#), "murderer of lambs," was, for [NBC Los Angeles](#), too good to not be true. The advice column "Is My Husband Gay?" (Does he "travel frequently to big cities or Asia"?) was, as the Atlantic Wire's John Hudson discovered, [taken at face value](#) by the Huffington Post.

Christwire owners Bryan Butvidas and Kirwin Watson, after fielding press queries and book offers for months, have finally decided to go public. In an interview with *New York*, Butvidas said the site's basic concept is to "see what Glenn Beck is talking about and then make it ten times worse."

"We're not trying to promote hate, we want to show how fake the world really is," he said. "We write to see how far we can get people to believe our nonsense. People believe anything they read on the Internet." Do readers get the joke? Just like with the media, not always. Butvidas, who usually pens columns under the name Tyson Bowers III, said some of the people who leave vituperative comments don't get the irony.

Butvidas, a software designer who lives in Southern California, and Watson, who is a health service worker in Kansas, have never met in person. They became friends through the humor site [Shoutwire](#).

"Christwire thinks anyone who isn't a hardcore Christian conservative is a communist or secretly gay, or working for the Chinese or the Russians," Butvidas said. "When we started, we didn't realize that there are zealots and political sites out there who really do believe that."

Will the hoaxes be harder to come by now that the site is receiving more public attention? Not necessarily, said Watson.

"People have these preconceived notions about how certain people are supposed to act, so if a conservative Christian has a website, there are certain things you expect to see," he said. "No matter how many times you say it's satire, people will still buy it."

The site produces a tiny amount of revenue through online ads, which goes toward hosting costs. Vitriolic anti-gay stories on Christwire often carry ads for gay dating sites and Fire Island vacation rentals, thanks to Google's irony-free algorithms.

The most prolific of the Christwire authors, "Stephenson Billings," author of the site's biggest hits like "Is My Husband Gay?" and "[The Golden Girls: How One TV Show Turned A Generation Of American Boys Into Homosexuals](#)," remains stubbornly anonymous. According to a [pseudonymous Facebook profile](#):

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Butvidas said that Billings began submitting articles via e-mail and has resisted all attempts to get him to come forward, even with potential book-deal cash as an incentive.

“We have no idea who the hell he is, or if it’s even a he,” Butvidas said. “We’re a satire site and we punk people, and here’s a guy who’s probably punking us.”

[Contributor Marie Jon](#), on the other hand, is a very real person. She is a “political/religious-based writer” for RenewAmerica.com who has [published numerous items](#) on Christwire like “Obama the Marxist.” According to Butvidas, Jon sent her columns to Christwire unsolicited; she did not reply to a request for comment. She told the *New York Times*, which [ran its own interview](#) with the Christwire founders earlier on Friday: “I might have mistakenly contributed in the past, because I didn’t know the site, and then shrugged my shoulders because I didn’t know how popular they were.”

We should note, fondly, that the anonymous Billings is a devoted reader of *New York Magazine* and this website’s [Sex Diaries](#). Or, in his words, the magazine “has thrown itself down willfully, dejected and impotent, on Gotham’s fluffypillowed bed of traded-fluids, begging for some hard lash of attention, blind to who is giving it as long as it penetrates their page-view projections.” In “[A Disturbing Look Inside the Mind of a Sex-Addicted Homosexual Hipster](#),” Billings continues:

ADVERTISEMENT

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Stephenson, we’re big fans of yours, too. Give us a call sometime.

*Additional reporting by Mike Vilensky*

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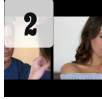
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The 6 Biggest Revelations From *The Bachelor's* After-the-Final-Rose Ceremony



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*The Bachelor* Finale's 'Unedited' Scene Was a Half-Hour Spectacle of Human Misery



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Elaine Chao Confesses Trump Personally Pushed to Kill Major NYC Project



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A Close Look at Lauren B.'s 94 Lines of Dialogue in *The Bachelor*



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Somebody Edited the Invertebrate Wikipedia Page to Include Paul Ryan



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Is Eliza the Most Thankless Part in *Hamilton*?



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Teenage Brothers on Sex, Social Media, and What Their Parents Don't Understand





### What We Learned From Porn Star Stormy Daniels's Lawsuit Against President Trump

She claims the "hush agreement" is invalid and Trump attorney Michael Cohen coerced her into signing a false statement.

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Yesterday at 6:51 p.m.

### Cynthia Nixon Could Mount A Primary Challenge to Cuomo

The incumbent governor would like a lefty-free route to reelection and perhaps a 2020 presidential contest. But Cynthia Nixon could stand in his way.

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Yesterday at 6:47 p.m.

### West Virginia's Striking Teachers Win Narrow Victory

The strikers wanted a 5 percent raises, funded by taxes on coal companies. Instead, they got one funded by Medicaid cuts.

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Yesterday at 6:29 p.m.

### Trump Administration Reverses Policy That Briefly Made President Seem Humane

If you've been jonesing to import some elephant body parts, now's the time.

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Yesterday at 6:27 p.m.

### Gary Cohn to Resign, Clearing the Way For Trump's Trade War

The White House just lost its influential opponent of dumb trade policies.

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Yesterday at 6:02 p.m.

### Elaine Chao Confesses Trump Personally Pushed to Kill Major NYC Project

In unusually dramatic congressional testimony.

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Yesterday at 4:01 p.m.

### Democrats to Gut Banking Regulations, for Bipartisanship's Sake

In the Senate, lawmakers put aside their differences, and work together to help banks abuse consumers and jeopardize our financial system.

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Yesterday at 3:34 p.m.

### Nashville Mayor Resigns Over Using Public Money to Fund Affair With Bodyguard

In a sex scandal that soon involved misuse of public funds, the rising star of Nashville politics lost her job and maybe her career.

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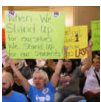


Yesterday at 2:45 p.m.

### Paul Ryan Is a Trump Lackey for One Reason

The motivation of the world's most transparent politician somehow continues to elude the news media.

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Yesterday at 2:12 p.m.

### Will Oklahoma Teachers Be the Next to Strike?

After years of frustration over low pay, Oklahoma teachers may emulate their counterparts in West Virginia and go on strike.

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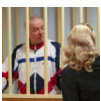


Yesterday at 12:01 p.m.

### A Surge in Primary Turnout Is a Good Sign for Democrats, But Not a Guarantee

If Democratic primary voting surges in Texas today, it could be a relatively meaningless blip, or an omen that the state is slowly turning blue.

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Yesterday at 11:42 a.m.

### U.K. Warns Russia As Ex-Spy Clings to Life

Sergei Skripal's exposure to an unknown substance fits a long pattern of Putin-approved malfeasance.



Yesterday at 9:20 a.m.

### North Korea Is Ready to Discuss Forfeiting Nukes, South Says

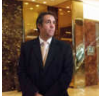
The U.S. said it wouldn't negotiate with Pyongyang unless denuclearization was on the table. Now it is.



Yesterday at 4:38 a.m.

### Sam Nunberg on Mueller, His Media Spree, and His Message for Trump

A late-night chat with Trump's former campaign adviser after one long, wild day.



Yesterday at 2:45 a.m.

### Trump Didn't Pay Porn Star Hush Money — Because He Stuffed His Lawyer: Report

It's possible Michael Cohen didn't get reimbursed for giving Stormy Daniels \$130K, but not for lack of trying.



3/5/2018 at 11:57 p.m.

### Former Trump Aide Vowed to Fight Mueller Subpoena in Bizarre Media Blitz

After a string of odd appearances, Sam Nunberg suggested he'd end up cooperating with the special counsel after all.



3/5/2018 at 8:35 p.m.

### Trump Confuses North and South Korea

They're, uh, not the same.



3/5/2018 at 6:51 p.m.

### Thad Cochran to Resign From Senate, Shaking Up Mississippi Politics

There will be two Senate seats from Mississippi up this November, with GOP Governor Phil Bryant controlling the landscape.



3/5/2018 at 4:57 p.m.

### Bibi and the Christian Right Agree: Trump Is the New Cyrus the Great

Netanyahu gives his friend the president the great favor of reinforcing conservative Evangelical belief that Trump's the supreme virtuous pagan.



3/5/2018 at 2:43 p.m.

### Paul Ryan and Other Republicans Try to Talk Trump Out of Tariffs

At least for a day, the House Speaker isn't a presidential lackey.

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