

For four months beginning in May 2001, major U.S. media outlets, including all three cable news channels, took the American public for a ride -- perpetrating a hoax that a married congressman was somehow involved in the disappearance of a female intern.

As I witnessed the farce from inside cable news, I could see it was all about ratings and had nothing to do with journalism. This week -- with these same outlets reporting a "break" in the 8-year-old murder case -- would be a good time for TV news executives to look back and give the public a big, fat apology.

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