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**WRITER:** Peter Fricke  
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It is disappointing that we can't even trust our own local media to accurately cover a topic as important – and supposedly bipartisan – as the integrity of Wisconsin's election process.

We've long since come to expect that partisanship taints most, if not all, of the reporting we encounter in the national media. But we like to think that we can place greater trust in reporters who live in our communities and, presumably, care about presenting matters truthfully to their friends and neighbors. Unfortunately, that's not always the case.

In the context of retired Supreme Court Justice Michael Gableman's investigation of the 2020 election, for instance, there have been numerous misrepresentations, mischaracterizations, and outright falsehoods promoted by reporters based right here in Wisconsin. The goal of this slanted coverage is obviously to preemptively undermine public faith in Gableman's eventual findings, even though the purpose of his investigation is to help Wisconsinites regain faith in the administration of our elections.

One line that frequently appears in local coverage of the Office of Special Counsel investigation, which Gableman leads, is that Gableman visited the site of the Maricopa County audit in Arizona and attended a widely-panned symposium hosted by Mike Lindell. The purpose of including these facts in almost every story about the Special Counsel investigation is clearly to paint Gableman as some sort of extremist, or even a conspiracy theorist.

But what, really, is the problem with Gableman seeking to educate himself about the approaches that others have taken when pursuing their own investigations into the 2020 election? He never claimed that he was seeking guidance or inspiration from those efforts, merely that he was trying to better understand how they went about their business. Couldn't he just as easily have learned about pitfalls to avoid in his own investigation? Moreover, shouldn't it matter that some of the people who are most zealous about conducting an Arizona-style audit in Wisconsin are also among Gableman's most vocal critics?

Similarly, many local news articles try to portray Justice Gableman as biased by claiming that he previously proclaimed that the election had been stolen. Gableman's actual statement, however, was that "Our elected leaders — your elected leaders — have allowed unelected bureaucrats at the Wisconsin Elections Commission to steal our vote."

Based on what he actually said, it's clear that Gableman was making a much more limited