

Celebrities should stay out of politics

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[...] Celebrities have a long history of commenting on politics and social issues, from songs about the labor movement by Pete Seeger to entertainers like Sammy Davis Jr. speaking out in support of civil rights to celebrities like Lady Gaga supporting issues like LGBTQ rights. But my problem comes when celebrities act like it is their job to shout their political beliefs from the rooftops.

- 5 Everyone has a right to speak freely, and as a journalist I value that as much as anyone. But that doesn't mean that all opinions are equal and should be believed and accepted without question.

Celebrities already seem to hold a magical fascination to people. Many U.S. citizens wish they could be a rock star, an actor, a comedian, a football player, a *New York Times* bestselling author or a reality TV star. The reason some of these people are famous even seems to be a mystery, (take the
10 Kardashians for example). But one thing is for certain, they didn't become famous for their involvement in the government. And just because they have something to say does not mean that they know what they're talking about.

While I will give credit to the celebrities who do their research and talk about things they know, many of those who comment are just saying what they feel or what they wish were true because it helps get
15 their point across. While speaking at Texas A&M¹ in 2013, Danny Glover² said, "The Second Amendment comes from the right to protect — for settlers to protect themselves from slave revolts, and from uprisings by Native Americans," according to a *Washington Times* article. Although much debate still does surround the Second Amendment, the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution in 1789. At that time, the early Americans were more worried about being able to fight against British
20 soldiers and creating a new country.

Glover's comment isn't the only one that doesn't come from fact. It is common to hear celebrities make blatantly incorrect, inaccurate or poorly researched comments about every issue under the sun.

Many celebrities are also out of touch with the issues they are talking about and the people they are trying to influence. According to the United States Census Bureau, the median household income in
25 the U.S. in 2015 was \$56,516. Dwayne Johnson made \$65 million, and Beyoncé made \$105 million in 2016, according to forbes.com. The difference is so large that many of the issues that matter to them may not or should not be the same as those that matter to average Americans.

[...]

Celebrities also seem to go out of their way, acting like it's their main job, to comment on politics. A
30 prime example of this is when Meryl Streep was awarded the Cecil B. DeMille Award for a lifetime of

¹ Texas A&M University

² American actor, producer and political activist

notable work at the 2017 Golden Globes, and took the time she had for an acceptance or thank you speech to rant about Donald Trump for six minutes.

35 While I do agree with some of Streep's points, that was not the time for her to make them. She was being honored for her work as an actress, not a politician or political commentator. She, like many other celebrities went out of her way to change the focus to political issues.

Some even make maliciously unnecessary comments, like a tweet from J.K. Rowling³ that referred to an article about Trump being compared to Lord Voldemort. According to cosmopolitan.com, she said, "How horrible. Voldemort was nowhere near as bad." Voldemort was a hateful, murderous character who only wanted one thing: to rule the wizarding world. While Trump may be hateful, he is nowhere
40 near as bad as a character who is known for trying to kill a baby.

[...]

³ Author of the Harry Potter book series