

Carr Misses the Beginning

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David Carr has a [column](#) in the New York Times claiming that the furor over airport pat-downs "began with a Drudge Report link to a video on Nov. 13 of an intrusive pat-down, and then leapt to social media and the rest of the Web." Mr. Carr is wrong; it began October 29 with a [post](#) by Jeffrey Goldberg at the Web site of the Atlantic.

Mr. Carr claims: "At a time of incredibly fractionalized [Does he mean *factionalized*?] politics, the pat-down was a single issue we could all rally around. For liberals, it was Big Brother grabbing liberties (with both hands) and conservatives once again felt the intrusive touch of Big Government in their pocket." But this gets the politics of the issue wrong; as the Cato Institute's David Boaz writes in a post headlined [Conservatives, Liberals, and the TSA](#):

where are the liberals outraged at this government intrusiveness? Where is Paul Krugman? Where is Arianna? Where is Frank Rich? Where is the *New Republic*? Oh sure, civil libertarians like Glenn Greenwald have criticized TSA excesses. But mainstream liberals have rallied around the Department of Homeland Security and its naked pictures: [Dana Milbank](#) channels John ("phantoms of lost liberty") Ashcroft: "Republicans are providing the comfort [to our enemies]. They are objecting loudly to new airport security measures." [Ruth Marcus](#): "Don't touch my junk? Grow up, America." [Eugene Robinson](#): "Be patient with the TSA." [Amitai Etzioni in the New Republic](#): "In defense of the 'virtual strip-search.'" And finally, the [editors of the New York Times](#): "attacks are purely partisan and ideological."

Could this just be a matter of viewing everything through a partisan lens? Liberals rally around the DHS of President Obama and Secretary Napolitano, while conservatives criticize it? Maybe. And although *Slate* [refers](#) to the opponents of body-scanning as "paranoid zealots," that term would certainly seem to apply to apply to [Mark Ames and Yasha Levine](#) of the *Nation*, who stomp their feet, get red in the face, and declare every privacy advocate from John Tyner ("don't touch my junk") on to be "astroturf" tools of "Washington Lobbyists and Koch-Funded Libertarians."

by Ira Stoll | Nov 28, 2010 at 10:49 pm

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