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# [Venture Capitalists' Critiques of Journalism Secretly Leaked to Journalists](vice.com) 91

Posted by EditorDavid on Monday July 06, 2020 @06:34AM from the fly-on-the-wall dept.
A confrontation between venture capitalists and journalists has been slowly playing out on Twitter — and in an incendiary article on VICE US.

It started when...

- A luggage startup's co-CEO complained on Instagram about young reporters who "forgo their personal ethics."

- A New York Times reporter called the posts "incoherent" and "disappointing."

- Angel investor Balaji S. Srinivasa (also the former CTO of Coinbase) later said the reporter "attacked" the co-CEO, who he then needed to defend — calling the reporter a sociopath in a multi-tweet thread.

- The New York Times reporter tweeted that investor had "been ranting about me by name for months now."

The reporter and the angel investor both finally ended up on Clubhouse, an elite invitation-only audio social network popular with venture capitalists, but the reporter left early. Later Vice [published leaked audio of the subsequent conversation](), which included Srinivasa and several other Andreessen Horowitz venture capitalists, in which Vice says participants "spent at least an hour talking about how journalists have too much power to

'cancel' people and wondering what they, the titans of Silicon Valley, could do about it."

Then [things got really ugly](#)...

Vice reports:

*The call shows how Silicon Valley millionaires, who have been coddled by the press and lauded as innovators and disruptors, fundamentally misunderstand the role of journalism the moment it turns a critical eye to their industry. It also suggests they're eager to find new ways to hit back at what they see as unfavorable and unfair press coverage...*

Then...

- Angel investor Jason Calacanis complained on Twitter about the leaked audio.

- A Ruby on Rails developer tweeted in response, "I really don't understand how nobody seems to have seen the 'this might be recorded, so let me watch what I say' problem coming."

Then David Heinemeier Hansson, creator of Ruby on Rails and the founder of Basecamp, shared his own thoughts:

*Pretty sure what's driving interest is a bunch of VCs plotting how to punish a journalist, musing about how the "VC model of truth" is superior to the New York Times, and other ridiculously batshit stuff. Nobody would give a damn about a recording of "5 things unicorns MUST DO...!"*

*Also, lol, at "secretly recorded a private conversation". Clubhouse is a damn improv stage for wannabe thought leaders in training, performing in front of an audience of people who'd like their money or access. One audience member just had enough and hit record.*

And finally...

- Angel investor Balaji S. Srinivasa launched a Twitter thread in response, calling the creator of Ruby on Rails "a rich Aryan."

- Srinivasa then questioned whether Basecamp's own new Hey email service would protect the privacy of its users against journalists using leaks, promising the first person to get a reply would get $50 in bitcoin.

The story ends with David Heinemeier Hansson (founder and CTO of Basecamp) posting that it was an easy question, then asking it so that he could reply to it himself and claim the bitcoin bounty.

*"I don't quite understand what it's for, though? For asking whether we'd hand over emails to journalists? Is that some sort of hard-hitting question that's reeeally going to send us tumbling?"*

He then simplified the question to "Do you give people's emails to journalists (or anyone else)," then supplied the answer.

"No."

Then he requested that the bitcoin be donated to the journalism-supporting non-profit [Freedom of the Press Foundation](#).