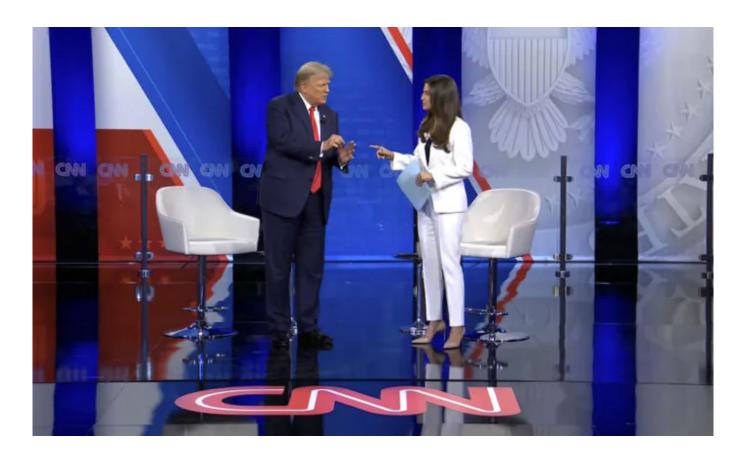# What the Trump Town Hall Reveals About CNN

by Roger L. Simon

Mayday! Mayday! Network overboard!

CNN, which apparently had originally scheduled its Donald Trump town hall event to go for as long as 90 minutes, cut the event at less than 70 minutes as if terrified the 45th president might be reelected right there by proclamation.

That wasn't exactly what the network had in mind.

Their host—who evidently saw her role more as a debater than as a moderator—walked straight into a Trumpian buzzsaw when the former president dubbed her a "nasty woman" to the obvious chortling approval of the St. Anselm College audience.

Indeed, that Manchester, New Hampshire, audience—incredible as

it seems in retrospect, it was hand-picked by CNN—was with Trump all the way, almost completely ignoring Collins's constant accusatory interruptions as if she weren't there.

Largely college students, they treated Trump with the respect due a former president, asking him earnest questions about subjects they deemed important to them from the open border to the Ukraine war.

Regarding the war, Trump said, as he has before, that it never would have happened were he still president, and that should he be elected in 2024, he will end it in one day. That latter may be something of an exaggeration, but it's clear his aim is to stop the horrendous carnage on both sides as quickly as possible.

This apparently flew by the host who, eager to trap her prey, immediately demanded to know if Trump would declare Vladimir Putin a war criminal.

Trump, in one of the most interesting moments of the evening, explained that that would be a bad idea if we were truly interested in peace. Such a declaration would only anger Putin and encourage him to fight on.

This psychological nicety was apparently lost on Collins.

But I think, deep down, what most infuriated the CNN crowd was that Trump was relatively good-humored throughout and frequently made witty responses that made the audience laugh and applaud in agreement.

It's easy to see that if he were to retire from politics, he would be the king of late night, outdoing even the current king Greg Gutfeld.

This is a great weapon for Trump in politics when he uses it, just as it was for Ronald Reagan.

Not that the CNN panel that was sitting in waiting when the

network cut the event early was even slightly amused. Longtime Democrat strategist and supposed wise man David Axelrod went so far as to call Trump a "sociopath." The others, including anchorman Anderson Cooper, nodded in agreement.

They were given their comeuppance, however, by Rep. Byron Donalds. They made the mistake of putting the Florida congressman on the panel who, after the others had their say, began to take down their assertions one-by-one in stunning fashion. It was obvious the panelists, including Cooper, were befuddled by how to handle the eloquent Donalds because he's black.

But not half so befuddled as the supporters of Trump's putative principal foe for the GOP nomination, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis.

Still smarting over poll numbers showing Trump in the lead by as many as 41 percentage points, the Never Back Down political action committee that supports DeSantis (@NvrBackDown24) issued the following tweet:

"On CNN tonight, Trump spent an hour talking about:

— What he did or didn't do on January 6, 2021

— Whether he will pardon people who harmed police officers

— How the 2020 election was rigged

— Whether he supports terminating parts of the U.S. Constitution or the whole thing because the 2020 election was rigged

— The sex abuse case he was just found guilty in

— A cat named "Vagina"

— His defense of his comments about grabbing women by their genitals

— The federal investigation into his stash of taxpayer-owned classified documents at Mar-a-Lago

— The investigation into his efforts to reverse his 2020 loss to Biden in Georgia

How does this Make America Great Again?"

The audience at St. Anselm's College might have something to say about that. We also might wonder if this was Ron DeSantis or Liz Cheney?