

Claire Hoy ? An event that?s over-covered

Last Saturday, your travelling correspondent happened to be in a restaurant in Santee, South Carolina, with some golfing friends when somebody turned one of the giant television sets to CNN.

For more than an hour as we sat there, the station kept playing and re-playing pictures of a piece of junk being taken from a fishing net, followed by some comments from the program host and off again to a panel of aviation experts.

Several hours later, CNN was still showing the same pictures and offering the same ?news? that the junk spotted by the pilot of a small airplane had nothing to do ? nada ? with the horrific tragedy of the missing Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 which, as you all must know, disappeared nearly three weeks ago along with all 239 passengers and crew.

Unless you have been living on Mars ? or somehow have had no connection whatsoever with anything resembling television news, particularly in the U.S. ? you will know that television (and to a lesser extent print) has obsessed with this story since it began. Actually, ?obsessed? doesn't quite cover it. To wit: in his recent USA Today column, media editor Rem Reider reported that during one stretch on March 12, CNN spent 256 of 271 minutes on the plane crash. To be fair, CNN isn't the only media outlet over-covering this event. But you get the point.

Of course it's a big story. There's not only the human tragedy of so many lives lost, there's the incredible mystery of just what happened.

That fact that ? at least as this is written ? nobody knows what happened has not stopped countless ?experts? from blabbing on endlessly about what could have happened. And all this, complete with endless audio ?alerts? announcing ?breaking news? despite the fact there really hasn't been any news since the plane disappeared on its way to China from Malaysia.

This is a direct result of the relatively new 24-hour ?news? cycle, a media reality which does not depend upon actual news to report but blathers on endlessly about the latest great issue. Real news, in today's media world, would still be a plus, but it apparently isn't really necessary to feed the beast.

And always with these great media obsessions there is the question of ?who's to blame? Who's the bad guy??

That seems something that might be determined once the facts are in and people actually can determine who did what to whom, but apparently that isn't necessary either. The Malaysian government ? an easy target ? is clearly at fault here, and amid the crazy speculation of black holes, zombie planes and ?supernatural forces? being involved (personally, I think it's likely Global Warming; not) all fingers are pointed squarely at the Malaysians.

To buttress the case that the Malaysians are bad guys here, the media continues to run videos of wailing men, women and children who lost their loved ones in this horrible human tragedy and, as you'd expect, are blaming the government.

I'd feel the same way if it were one of my loved ones. We all would. But that hardly makes it reality.

And in this age where everything must be instantaneous ? or obviously there's a coverup and/or conspiracy, or both ? we keep being told that time is passing and the Malaysians still haven't told us what happened or where the plane crashed.

Never mind that the Indian Ocean near Australia ? the current destination of choice, reaches depths of 21,000 feet, which, as Clive Irving wrote in [TheDailyBeast.com](#), is ?far deeper than faced by any other aviation deep sea search.?

Indeed, when an Air France Airbus crashed in a storm over the Atlantic Ocean in 2009, it took searchers almost two full years to locate and recover its black boxes in water about 13,000 feet deep. And 10 years earlier, a Varig Brazilian Airlines 707 disappeared off the coast of Japan and, to this day, no trace of that airplane or its passengers and crew has ever been found.

Clearly, finding a crash in the middle of huge oceans is not an easy task. But until it is found ? or, if it is found at all ? the endless twaddle on television and elsewhere is just that, twaddle.

It's not that it should be ignored, for heaven's sake. Of course it's a big story. But is it really worth more time than, oh, Putin invading and taking over Crimea, or a horrible mudslide in Washington State that wiped out an entire community, for example?

No wonder people get sick of the media. I've been active in the media for 50 years, and I get sick of this stuff too.

