



SPECIAL REPORT

AN IN-DEPTH STUDY, ANALYSIS OR REVIEW EXPLORING THE MEDIA

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COUNTING THE REASONS TO DEFUND

The 20 Most Memorable Leftist Excesses of Public Broadcasting

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Congress has debated this year whether taxpayers should provide a half-billion dollars for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (which in turn, funds PBS and NPR). House Republicans proposed on September 29 that the federal funding for CPB should end. Fiscally, it's an obviously non-essential expense in an era of trillion-dollar deficits — not to mention hundreds of programming choices on cable TV, the Internet, and satellite radio.

But there is another reason for defunding: the absolute refusal of the taxpayer-subsidized public-broadcasting empire to attempt balance and objectivity in all “programming of a controversial nature,” as it says in the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967. Instead, PBS and NPR programmers continue to lurch hard to port to please liberal Democrats and radical-left activists.

To underline how dramatically PBS and NPR have tried to shift the American political discussion to the left, Media Research Center analysts have assembled a list of the 20 most obnoxiously biased stories or statements from public broadcasting stars and stories over the last 25 years, including this top-ten list:

- 1. PBS host Tavis Smiley insists America has a terrible Christian terrorist problem.** In 2010, he told an author that Christians blow up people “every day” in the United States.
- 2. The narrator of a PBS series on Africa praises Moammar Qaddafi.** In his 1986 series *The Africans*, Muslim professor/activist Ali Mazrui insisted Qaddafi offered “supreme ideals” to make Africans and Arabs “masters of their own destinies” against the West.
- 3. NPR reporter Nina Totenberg wishes Jesse Helms death from AIDS.** When Helms insisted in 1995 that AIDS drew a disproportionate amount of federal funding, Totenberg was disproportionately mean-spirited.
- 4. PBS regular Julianne Malveaux hopes Clarence Thomas dies young of heart disease.** On the talk show *To the Contrary* in 1994, panelist Malveaux proclaimed, “I hope his wife feeds him lots of eggs and butter and he dies early like many black men do, of heart disease.”

5. NPR's foreign editor vows to "smoke out" American troop locations in Afghanistan. Weeks after 9/11, Loren Jenkins told the *Chicago Tribune* he had no desire to aid a lying Pentagon. He represented "history."

6. Andrei Codrescu wishes evangelical Christians would disappear. Days before Christmas in 1995, the NPR commentator read a pamphlet on the Rapture and said "The evaporation of four million who believe this crap would leave the world an instantly better place."

7. Longtime PBS host Bill Moyers proclaims GOP officials wearing flag pins after 9/11 remind him of communist China. On his weekly show *Now* in 2003, Moyers ranted, "When I see flags sprouting on official lapels, I think of the time in China when I saw Mao's *Little Red Book*."

8. Bill Moyers insists the Nicaraguan dictators were better Christians than their American critics. In a 1987 program, Moyers proclaimed that in a child's painting, the "black birds" represented America, and the "white birds" were the Sandinistas who revered freedom, George Washington, and Jesus Christ.

9. NPR reporter Nina Totenberg tries to destroy the Supreme Court nomination of Clarence Thomas by breaking the story of Anita Hill's unproven sexual-harassment claims. Totenberg later downplayed or ignored sexual-assault claims by Paula Jones and Juanita Broaddrick against Bill Clinton.

10. PBS airs NEA-funded "Tongues Untied" documentary celebrates black gay sex with explicitly pornographic talk and anti-religious overtones. In 1991, the documentary series *P.O.V.* championed the advocacy of conservative-bashing Marlon Riggs.

Unlike NPR's unceremonious firing of Juan Williams last year, none of these offenses ever resulted in punishment. In exchange for the long-standing tilt of public broadcasting, liberal politicians have reliably voted and lobbied for CPB funding increases, and liberal activists have rallied to "save" their subsidies. In the discussion over defunding CPB since the dramatic Republican landslide in the House in 2010, PBS has worked hand in glove and explicitly thanked the hard-left activists of MoveOn.org and FreePress against a defunding push from conservatives.

The MRC analysis concludes that because of its taxpayer subsidies and ideological stance in opposition to commercial TV and radio, it's natural that public broadcasting would become a liberal playground. Careful analysis of PBS and NPR content from news executives or CPB officials could offset this tilt. But all the evidence since Congress acted in 1967 shows the idea of any official seeking balance is strictly forbidden. Instead, long-standing CPB policy holds that Congress should be ignored and walled off from raising any objections about bias. Defunding CPB would not stop liberal bias, but it would stop the outrage of conservatives (and Americans in general) being forced to fund fervent attacks on them with their own taxpayer dollars.

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COUNTING THE REASONS TO DEFUND

The 20 Most Memorable Leftist Excesses of Public Broadcasting

BY TIM GRAHAM AND
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On February 19, the U.S. House of Representatives voted on a party-line vote of 235 to 189 for a continuing resolution that included zeroing out the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's advance appropriation for Fiscal Year 2013. This package was not approved by the Democrat-controlled Senate, but it was the first time in the decades since the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 that the House voted to defund CPB, and it will not be the last.

On September 29, House Republican appropriators proposed a bill that would eliminate taxpayer subsidies for the CPB starting in 2014. (Money is allocated for the agency two years in advance.) Fiscally, it's an obviously non-essential expense in an era of trillion-dollar deficits — not to mention hundreds of programming choices on cable TV, the Internet, and satellite radio.

Despite their press-release boilerplate that they are a “smart and careful investment” and a “successful example of a vital public-private partnership,” the CPB (which in turn, funds PBS and NPR) is an obviously non-essential federal expense in an era of trillion-dollar deficits. In television terms, the technological rationale of providing diversity in a three-network universe no longer applies — not when the public can find hundreds of programming choices on cable TV, the Internet, and satellite radio.

But there is another reason for defunding: the absolute refusal of the taxpayer-funded public-broadcasting empire to provide balance and fair access to all sides of the political debate. Instead, the CPB makes no attempt whatsoever to rein in PBS and NPR programmers as they lurch hard to the left.

In exchange for the long-standing tilt of public broadcasting, liberal politicians have reliably voted and lobbied for CPB funding increases, and liberal activists have rallied to “save” their subsidies. They often accuse conservatives of trying to destroy children's

educational programming. Before the House vote, liberals posed with the PBS cartoon character Arthur the Aardvark. “We need your help today,” pleaded Rep. Ed Markey. “We can’t leave Arthur and all of his pals in the lurch.”

But with the resurgence of a threat to their subsidies, PBS worked hand in glove and explicitly thanked the hard-left activists of MoveOn.org and FreePress against a defunding push from conservatives. The PBS Twitter feed carried the message: “A special thanks to @moveon for its help and support this week.”

MoveOn’s online petition insisted: “Congress must protect NPR and PBS and guarantee them permanent funding, free from political meddling.” Liberals suggest “public” broadcasting should be hermetically sealed from any attempt to question the fairness and accuracy of what PBS and NPR put on the air. It’s considering “meddling” to try and enforce the spirit of the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967, which required “fairness and objectivity in all programming of a controversial nature.” It’s “meddling” for members of Congress to question whether public-broadcasting subsidies are being well-spent — hence the long-standing liberal call for “permanent” funding, as in some form of huge endowment that cannot be affected by Congress.

To underline how dramatically PBS and NPR have tried to shift the political discussion to the left, Media Research Center analysts have assembled a list of the 20 most obnoxiously biased stories or statements from public broadcasting stars and stories over the last 25 years.

Despite the self-image of PBS and NPR journalists that their networks are an oasis of civility and political independence, there are too many examples of vicious death wishes and political smears; bracing hostility to Christianity and blatant celebration of abortion and homosexuality; and perhaps most dismaying, anti-military attitudes and jarring adoration of some of America’s oppressive enemies. Unlike NPR’s unceremonious firing of Juan Williams last year, none of these offenses ever resulted in punishment.

1. PBS host Tavis Smiley insists America has a terrible Christian terrorist problem (2010)

Tavis Smiley is a black radical who’s written books with titles like *Hard Left* (1996). NPR gave him a talk show in 2002, and then he took his act to PBS for a half-hour weeknight talk show in 2004. On May 25, 2010, he interviewed author Ayaan Hirsi Ali, an atheist former Muslim and bold critic of radical Muslims.

Smiley demanded to know: “You say unapologetically and rather frankly that your mission here is to inform the West about the danger of Islam,” he began. “What danger do we need to be made aware of?” Ali brought up the deaths of 13 at Fort Hood and the failed Times Square bomber, and said jihadists “got into their minds that to kill other people is a great thing to do and that they would be rewarded in the hereafter.” Smiley shot back: “But Christians do that every single day in this country.”



Ali couldn’t believe her ears: “Do they blow people up every day?” Smiley’s response: “Yes. Oh, Christians, every day, people walk into post offices, they walk into schools, that’s what Columbine is. I could do this all day long.”

Smiley would not be dissuaded. Christianity has a much darker record in America every day than Islam, he insisted. “There are so many more examples of Christians — and I happen to be a Christian. That’s back to this notion of your idealizing Christianity in my mind, to my read. There are so many more examples, Ayaan, of Christians who do that than you could ever give me examples of Muslims who have done that inside this country, where you live and work.”

PBS ombudsman Michael Getler offered an understated thumbs-down: “I thought Smiley went off course here in a way that was guaranteed to be inflammatory....one would think that Smiley would have been better prepared to make what was certain to be a controversial case.” But there was no apology or punishment from PBS. Smiley’s still on for 30 minutes every weeknight.

2. The narrator of a PBS series on Africa praises Moammar Qaddafi (1986)

In October 1986, PBS began airing a nine-part series called *The Africans*, co-produced by the BBC and Washington PBS station WETA. Lynne Cheney, then the chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities, got the NEH logo removed from the series in protest of how the producer and narrator, Ali Mazrui, “extols the virtues of Moammar Qaddafi.”

In the show, Mazrui boasted: “Two supreme ideals seem to have inspired Qaddafi’s adventures: to turn Africans and Arabs into masters of their own destiny, and to transform them into major actors on the world stage. Qaddafi is another example of how it is not enough just to stop being pawns in the games of the powerful. We must become global

players in our own right.” Asked by reporters if Qaddafi is a terrorist, Mazrui replied, “The man is brilliant, but inclined to be unpredictable in his loyalties.”

Suzanne Weil, then the senior vice president for programming at PBS, told *The Washington Post*: “I find him absolutely riveting. He is Islamic, and that’s the view he has. He has not a lot of wonderful things to say about the West, but we have wonderful respect for our audiences, and we expect they can see other points of view and compare.” But there were no other points of view in the series.

Asked about the one-sided presentation, then-WETA president Ward Chamberlain Jr. conceded: “The Western world doesn’t come out very well in the series,” but “the Western world shouldn’t come out too well regarding its role in Africa.”

In an article in *The New Republic*, Charles Krauthammer found the show looked “through a prism of vulgar Marxism, anachronistic economics, and anti-Western resentment.” Mazrui even announced in the series that Karl Marx “was the last of the great Jewish prophets.”

3. NPR reporter Nina Totenberg wishes Jesse Helms dead from AIDS (1995)

On July 5, 1995 *The New York Times* reported Sen. Jesse Helms was holding up the Ryan White AIDS Care Act with moral objections, saying AIDS is caused by “deliberate, disgusting, revolting conduct.” He also insisted AIDS was getting more federal money per victim than other diseases with many more victims. At the time, the American Heart Association estimated that the Department of Health and Human Services spent \$36,763 in research for every AIDS or HIV-related death in 1993, in contrast to \$3,708 for every death from cancer, \$1,032 for every death from heart disease and \$731 for every death from stroke.



But Helms was easily demonized. On the PBS show *Inside Washington* on July 8, columnists Charles Krauthammer and Tony Snow both admonished Helms for blurring the funding issues with his moral objections. Host Tina Gulland said “I don’t think I have any Jesse Helms defenders here. Nina?”

National Public Radio Supreme Court reporter Nina Totenberg uncorked some hate speech: “Not me. I think he ought to be worried about what’s going on in the Good Lord’s

mind, because if there is retributive justice, he'll get AIDS from a transfusion, or one of his grandchildren will get it."

There were no gasps or protests, even from the conservatives. Gulland didn't even blink before changing the subject away from these death wishes. "Let me stop a moment. Because I want to tell you how the President and the Speaker of the House reacted, because the Speaker of the House had an interesting solution. Let's hear from them right now." Juan Williams was fired for supposedly Islamophobic comments on Fox News, but NPR never suspended Totenberg or punished her in any way for these remarks. The media elite never reported them.

4. PBS regular Julianne Malveaux hopes Clarence Thomas dies young of heart disease (1994)

On the PBS all-female talk show *To The Contrary* on November 4, 1994, host Bonnie Erbe began by promoting the anti-Clarence Thomas book *Strange Justice* by liberal reporters Jane Mayer and Jill Abramson. She touted "new allegations corroborating Anita Hill's charges of sexual harassment against now-Justice Clarence Thomas." Erbe wondered out loud if public opinion would finally tilt toward Hill instead of Thomas.



In the show's introduction, left-wing panelist Julianne Malveaux, a *USA Today* columnist and Pacifica Radio host, professed not to care: "I'm more concerned about his reptilian positions against affirmative action and working people."

But once the show began, Malveaux's loathing of Thomas grew uglier. "You know, I hope his wife feeds him lots of eggs and butter and he dies early like many black men do, of heart disease." When conservative Betsy Hart protested, Malveaux wouldn't back down. "Well, that's how I feel. He is an absolutely reprehensible person."

Erbe, the supposed moderator, didn't cry foul to preserve the alleged PBS ideal of civility. She simply wanted to move on to discuss how it was somehow "corroborating" Hill that the owner of a video store named Graffiti had claimed to some liberal reporters that Thomas rented porn videotapes (although he had no records to prove it). Erbe didn't mention that even NPR's Nina Totenberg had steered clear of this shaky evidence.

5. NPR's foreign editor vows to "smoke out" American troop locations in Afghanistan (2001)

On October 12, 2001, barely a month after 9/11, NPR senior foreign editor Loren Jenkins was quoted in a *Chicago Tribune* column by Steve Johnson that he wanted his 13 reporters in Afghanistan and the Middle East to find the American troops in a war zone. "The game of reporting is to smoke 'em out," he boasted. When asked whether NPR reporters would report the presence of an American commando unit in Pakistan, Jenkins insisted: "You report it. I don't represent the government. I represent history, information, what happened."

At NPR, Jenkins' operating theory about information from the military was that "in one form or another, they never tell you the truth. They've been proven wrong too many times." He proclaimed: "The best reporting is getting to a place and assessing it yourself. Since Vietnam, the Pentagon has made this harder and harder for reporters to do, mostly because they all blame the press for losing the war in Vietnam."

In part because liberal media reporters were not scandalized, NPR took almost a month before issuing a "clarification," when vice president Bruce Drake suggested Jenkins was taken out of context: "Loren Jenkins neither believes nor intended to suggest that NPR would engage in reporting that would put in peril the lives of U.S. military personnel. NPR reporters, producers and editors always take into account whether our reporting might put lives in danger, or pose an unacceptable security risk. NPR would never knowingly compromise the security or safety of American military or national security operations by reporting information that would endanger them."

Not even Johnson, the *Tribune* columnist, gleaned that impression, as he reported Jenkins "doesn't exhibit any of the hesitation of some of his news-business colleagues, who stress that they try to factor security issues into their coverage decisions."

6. Days before Christmas, NPR commentator Andrei Codrescu wishes evangelical Christians would disappear (1995)

NPR's reputation for being anti-religious was solidified on the December 19, 1995 edition of *All Things Considered*, when Andrei Codrescu, a Romanian immigrant and English professor in New Orleans, unloaded on fundamentalist Christians just days before Christmas. He described how he had been handed a pamphlet on the Rapture, based on

New Testament scripture that the righteous will be “caught up together in the clouds” with Jesus when he returns to Earth:

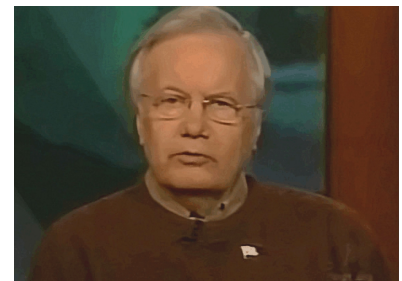
“The Rapture, and I quote, ‘is the immediate departure from this Earth of over four million people in less than a fifth of a second,’ unquote,” he read. “This happily-volatilized mass of the saved were born again in Jesus Christ. Everybody left behind will basically go to Hell but not before experiencing Armageddon, which is a really bad end of the world. If you find yourself in this situation, there isn’t much you can do except, one, starve yourself to death or, two, get your head cut off.”

Codrescu continued: “This loving Christmas message coming as it did amid the jungle of the mall Santa and the twinkling manger at the corner of Canal and the Ramparts made it clear that the Rapture is indeed necessary. The evaporation of four million who believe this crap would leave the world an instantly better place.”

NPR received 40,000 letters about this commentary. Three days after the commentary, NPR apologized (despite Codrescu’s lack of remorse), but refused then-Christian Coalition leader Ralph Reed’s request for a rebuttal. “We turned them down because we felt it was a mistake in the first place,” said NPR flack Kathy Scott. “We weren’t stating a position. You can’t put a counterpoint to a mistake.”

7. Longtime PBS host Bill Moyers proclaims GOP officials wearing flag pins after 9/11 remind him of communist China (2003)

On February 28, 2003, a few weeks before the Iraq war began, Bill Moyers sported a flag lapel pin on his PBS show *Now*, but not to proclaim his pride in America. “It no more occurred to me to flaunt the flag on my chest than it did to pin my mother’s picture on my lapel to prove her son’s love. Mother knew where I stood; so does my country. I even tuck a valentine in my tax returns on April 15. So what’s this doing here? Well, I put it on to take it back. The flag’s been hijacked and turned into a logo, the trademark of a monopoly on patriotism.”



Moyers said he decided to wear the flag for one night as a “modest riposte” to the “people whose ardor for war grows disproportionately to their distance from the fighting. They’re in the same league as those swarms of corporate lobbyists wearing flags and prowling Capitol Hill for tax breaks, even as they call for more spending on war.”

The commentary was conflicted in that Moyers objected to “moralistic ideologues in Washington sporting the flag in their lapels while writing books and running Web sites and publishing magazines attacking dissenters as un-American,” and yet he suggested the administration was like Mao Zedong and Osama bin Laden. Citing how President Bush and Vice President Cheney wear flag lapel pins, Moyers was reminded of communism: “When I see flags sprouting on official lapels, I think of the time in China when I saw Mao’s Little Red Book on every official’s desk, omnipresent and unread.”

As if that moral equivalence wasn’t offensive enough, Moyers compared the President to the leader of al-Qaeda. Both were terrorists: “So I put this on as a modest riposte to men with flags in their lapels who shoot missiles from the safety of Washington think tanks, or argue that sacrifice is good as long as they don’t have to make it, or approve of bribing governments to join the coalition of the willing — after they first stash the cash. I put it on to remind myself that not every patriot thinks we should do to the people of Baghdad what bin Laden did to us.”

8. Bill Moyers insists the Nicaraguan dictators were better Christians than their American critics (1987)

With support from Castro’s Cuba and the Soviet Union, Nicaragua’s communist Sandinista dictatorship ruled the country from 1979 to its electoral defeat in 1990. But on December 9, 1987, in a small series titled *God and Politics*, PBS host Bill Moyers insisted that the communists had found Jesus, and the Americans were somehow the oppressive imperial menace.

Moyers touted the children of the revolution and their paintings:

The black birds symbolize the long oppression of Nicaragua by the Somoza dictators who came to power, half a century ago, with the help of the United States government. The white dove of freedom soars with the Sandinista revolution whose heroes included Jesus Christ, George Washington and the nationalist hero Augusto Sandino, long martyred by the Somozas. It is the vision of rebuilding society through religion and revolution that has drawn many North American Christians to support the FSLN, the Sandinista Front for National Liberation. Liberation theology has become to them a 20th century reformation placing a church squarely on the side of the poor. They come as if to Mecca, to stand with the people’s church and the Sandinistas.

Methodist missionary Paul Jeffrey suggested America was like the Roman crucifiers: “Nicaragua is like Palestine 2000 years ago, and the United States today is like Rome was then. And to be here is to see the world from the other side. And, and to see how the wrath

of the empire, exercised against this poor, bankrupt little country, makes people suffer here. And in a very real sense they are Jesus and they're suffering as Christ suffered. And I think we North Americans, as we can somehow open ourselves up to that, it can have a redemptive value for us, just as the suffering of Christ does."

Moyers aired another minister, George Baldwin, insisting the Christian gospel is "revolutionary" and "radical." Moyers applauded the sound of subversion: "You're a dangerous man, you know that?...If your example were followed, multiplied, your ideas spread — they're subversive to this world." Baldwin replied: "That's right. I do want to be a danger to that world."

9. NPR reporter Nina Totenberg tries to destroy the Supreme Court nomination of Clarence Thomas by breaking the story of Anita Hill's unproven sexual-harassment claims (1991)

In September of 1991, the confirmation of conservative Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas was approaching. Liberals were looking for smoking guns and silver bullets to kill the nomination. One of those liberals was Nina Totenberg, the Supreme Court reporter for National Public Radio. She broke the story of Anita Hill's never-proven claims of sexual harassment, that Thomas has supposedly asked her on dates, boasted of his sexual prowess, and told lurid tales about the pornography he'd seen.

Hill wanted to destroy the Thomas nomination anonymously. Totenberg ended that strategy. Hill said she would not talk to Totenberg until NPR received a copy of her affidavit to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Totenberg complained to Ricki Seidman, a Ted Kennedy aide, that she could not secure Hill's affidavit. Seidman called James Brudney, an aide to liberal Democrat Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, and Totenberg received a copy by fax.

Totenberg went right from the activist breaking the story to co-anchoring three days of Hill-Thomas hearings on PBS. Totenberg repeatedly used breaks in the hearings to defend herself and her liberal sources. On four different occasions, she praised the positive role of leaks. "The history books are full of important and historic events that were the result of news leaks... [Watergate] would have just been a third-rate robbery if there hadn't been a lot of leaks disclosing what it had all been about." On eight occasions, Totenberg emphasized the credibility of Hill's "corroborating" witnesses.

When special counsel Peter Fleming was appointed by the Senate to investigate who leaked the Hill affidavit in violation of Senate rules, Totenberg defended herself by shredding all the incriminating documents. So much for the "public" in National Public

Radio. However, Totenberg later downplayed the sexual-assault claims by Paula Jones against Bill Clinton, insisting Jones “was interested in money” and made her charges first at a conference of “Clinton’s sworn political enemies, whereas “Anita Hill never asked for money” and “went directly to the Senate Judiciary Committee” — as if there weren’t any enemies of Thomas there.

NPR’s single report on Juanita Broaddrick, who accused Bill Clinton of sexual assault, aired on February 25, 1999, and reporter Brooke Gladstone underlined the unproven: “The hotel where the alleged crime took place no longer exists. There are no witnesses, no police records, no medical records....In her interview last night, Broaddrick’s demeanor was somber and credible, but the incident she purports to recount occurred too long ago to prosecute and cannot be proven.” She wasn’t automatically accepted and honored like Anita Hill.

10. PBS airs NEA-funded *Tongues Untied* documentary celebrating black gay sex with explicitly pornographic talk and anti-religious overtones (1991)

Before he died of AIDS in 1994, gay leftist filmmaker Marlon Riggs was a politically correct magnet for federal subsidies for his documentaries. Riggs not only received grants from the NEA, the NEH, PBS, and CPB. He was awarded a seat on the PBS Programming Policy Committee to advise on the entire PBS schedule.

On July 16, 1991, the PBS series *P.O.V.* aired the Riggs film *Tongues Untied*, an exploration of the alleged oppression faced by the black gay male with AIDS. It was also sexually explicit, with male nudity and lines like “Grinding my memory, humping my need...Been waiting for your light bulb to glow for me, waiting to exchange hard-ass love, calloused affection.” At one point, Riggs begged, “Anoint me with cocoa oil and cum so I speak in tongues twisted so tight they untangle my mind.” A chorus of voices joined in at another point with the refrain, “Let me suck it, let me lick it, let me taste it, let me suck it.” Eighteen of the top 50 TV markets declined to run the show, but it did air in an estimated 60 percent of public TV markets.

TV critics passionately defended Riggs. Howard Rosenberg of the *Los Angeles Times* complained: “One station manager who rejected *Tongues Untied* called it pornographic. He’s wrong. The film isn’t pornographic, the charge is.” Ed Siegel of *The Boston Globe* pushed even further, advocating a blacklist of timid executives: “If this were a rational world, we would be talking today about rounding up all the station managers who banned *Tongues Untied* and stripping them of their right to run a public television station.”

Conservatives were haters of the worst kind. Riggs insisted. "Black homosexuality, the triple taboo, equates in their minds with an unspeakable obscenity....In their rhetorical equivalent to hate-filled fag-bashing, the morality watchdogs smeared and disfigured *Tongues Untied* beyond recognition."

11. PBS awards leftist editor Lewis Lapham a six-part series or "essay" to trash militaristic American foreign policy from Teddy Roosevelt to Ronald Reagan (1989)

In 1989, PBS aired a six-part series titled *America's Century*, starring Lewis Lapham, the leftist editor of *Harper's* magazine. He called it an "essay in television documentary form." In Lapham's view, the entire 20th century was an unfolding mess of American violence. Lapham began with the troubling "militarism and imperialism" of Theodore Roosevelt, and kept the attack on until he'd reached Ronald Reagan and the "confidence of his belief in all the American fairy tales."



Lapham compared Reagan to John Wayne: "They admired Wayne just as later they admired Ronald Reagan, his friend and understudy, because they knew could count on Wayne to defend the sanctity of myth against the heresy of fact."

Grenada was just another example of imperialism, and Lapham even insisted the U.S. barely won. "The conquest of Grenada was a photo opportunity to which the American press was belatedly invited, only after 6,000 American troops had barely managed to defeat 750 Cuban engineers. As a military exercise, the invasion was as clumsy as it was unconstitutional."

The anti-communist Nicaraguan resistance was evil: "For the most part, the Nicaraguan Contras burned villages and murdered civilians. On behalf of their cause, Reagan sold out his oath of office and subverted the Constitution." Reagan was a despot and his aide Oliver North had no conscience: "Oliver North presented himself as the immortal boy in the heroic green uniform of Peter Pan. Although wishing to be seen as a humble patriot, the Colonel's testimony showed him to be a treacherous and lying agent of the national security state, willing to do anything asked of him by a President to whom he granted the powers of an Oriental despot."

While Lapham admitted the series leaned left, PBS press rep Mary Jane McKinven denied that to MRC at the time: "It's not our business to label our programs like that. Over the wide range and scheme of things, we have exhibited balance in programming."

12. PBS journalism panel presses Mike Wallace, Peter Jennings to agree they would sell out American troops to maintain journalistic integrity (1989)

On the PBS series *Ethics in America* on March 7, 1989, Harvard professor Charles Ogletree led the nation's leading journalists into a chilling discovery. In a future war involving U.S. soldiers, what would a TV reporter do if he learned the enemy troops with which he was traveling were about to launch a surprise attack on an American unit? ABC anchor Peter Jennings and CBS correspondent Mike Wallace agreed: getting ambush footage came first.

Ogletree set up a theoretical war between "North Kosan" and U.S.-supported "South Kosan." At first Jennings responded: "If I was with a North Kosanese unit that came upon Americans, I think I personally would do what I could to warn the Americans." Wallace countered that other reporters, including himself, "would regard it simply as another story that they are there to cover." Jennings' position bewildered Wallace: "I'm a little bit of a loss to understand why, because you are an American, you would not have covered that story."



"Don't you have a higher duty as an American citizen to do all you can to save the lives of soldiers rather than this journalistic ethic of reporting fact?" Ogletree asked. Without hesitating Wallace responded: "No, you don't have higher duty...You're a reporter." This persuaded Jennings, who changed his view: "I think he's right, too. I chickened out."

Military advisers and generals on the panel suggested "you're Americans first, and you're journalists second." Wallace remained mystified by the concept, wondering "what in the world is wrong with photographing this attack by North Kosanese on American soldiers?" Later, Ogletree noted the "venomous reaction" from George Connell, a Marine Corps colonel, who angrily declared: "I feel utter contempt. Two days later they're both walking off my hilltop, they're 200 yards away and they get ambushed. And they're lying there wounded. And they're going to expect I'm going to send Marines up there to get them. They're just journalists, they're not Americans....And Marines will die, going to get a couple of journalists."

13. Bill Moyers invites a conservative and a liberal to both argue in favor of impeaching George W. Bush (2007)

PBS omnipresence Bill Moyers devoted his entire hour-long *Bill Moyers Journal* on July 13, 2007 to the need to impeach George Bush and Dick Cheney. The hour had two guests, and both were aggressively pro-impeachment: John Nichols of *The Nation* magazine, author of the book *The Genius of Impeachment*, and lawyer Bruce Fein, whom Moyers labeled a “conservative.”

Fein claimed the Bush-Cheney mentality was “‘I can then use the military to go into your home and kill anyone there, who I think is al-Qaeda or drop a rocket.’ That is overreaching. That is a claim even King George III didn’t make.” When Bush aide Sara Taylor said in a Senate hearing that she took “an oath to the President,” to Fein, “that was like the military in Germany saying, ‘My oath is to the Fuhrer, not to the country.’”

Moyers played the skeptic with some questions, but the tone was so radical that it was not only savagely anti-Bush, but even anti-Pelosi: “You guys don’t live in La-la land. Both of you are in and around power all the time. Why doesn’t Nancy Pelosi see it her duty to take on at least the impeachment hearings that you say would educate the public?” Fein replied: “Because I think that politics has become debased so that it’s a matter of one party against another and jockeying and maneuvering. There is no longer any statesmanship.”

In a show-ending commentary, Moyers insisted PBS should have carried the hard left’s “debate” on impeachment, “all of it, in prime time” — when even MSNBC found it too fringy to take seriously. Moyers concluded: “When we broadcast teach-ins on the Vietnam war, and the Watergate hearings during the trial of Richard Nixon, it was a real public service — the reason PBS was created. We should keep Iraq in prime time every week — the fighting and dying, the suffering, the debate, the politics — the extraordinary costs. It’s months until September. This war is killing us now, body and soul.”

14. PBS’s *Now* devotes a half-hour to assessing if the pro-life movement’s “domestic terrorism” is hurting the abortion business (2007)

On June 12, 2007, the PBS show *Now* (formerly with Bill Moyers) devoted most of its half-hour to smearing the pro-life movement. It didn’t matter how many times activists decried the shooting of late-term abortionist George Tiller — they were still advocates of violence and terrorism. PBS hailed two other late-term abortionists, Dr. Warren Hern and Dr. Leroy Carhart.

Now host David Brancaccio began the program with a topic sentence: "If terrorism uses violence to change behavior, was Tiller's killing an act of domestic terrorism? And viewed through that gruesome prism, did it succeed?" Correspondent Maria Hinojosa asked Hern: "Do you say they've won? They've been successful?" Hern replied: "Of course, they won. But this is the consequence of this kind of violence and terrorism. Terrorism works ... The message from the anti-abortion movement is, 'Do what we tell you to do, or we will kill you.' And they do."

Hinojosa announced at the outset that PBS would focus on sympathy with the Left: "We wanted to know what it's like to live your life as a target on the frontlines of the abortion battle. And we wanted to find out what the violence directed at abortion providers means for medical doctors, for free speech, and for our society."

Carhart attacked: "They may claim innocence, and they may technically, under the law, be innocent, but their heart was certainly with Scott Roeder on the day that he shot Dr. Tiller." Hern echoed: "The anti-abortion organizations, you know, making these statements of distress and disapproval. No, no, no, no, no. This is what they wanted to happen. And it happened." Hern went further. "This is a terrorist movement. And they instill fear in people....This is a civil war. The anti-abortion people are using bombs and bullets. And they've been doing this for 30 years."

PBS also aired a series of Bill O'Reilly clips where he referred to "Tiller the Baby Killer," and then Hern denounced O'Reilly as an accessory to murder: "It's offensive, it's vulgar, it's grotesque, it's fascist speech that's designed to get Dr. Tiller killed, and it worked."

15. PBS airs ten-part *Race to Save the Planet* series filled with dire predictions that the world would face "enormous calamities in a very short time" (1990)

In 1990, the panic over global warming was in full swing, and from October 7 to 11, PBS aired ten hours of a series gaudily titled *Race to Save the Planet*. The show's host was Meryl Streep, who proclaimed: "By the year 2000, that's less than 10 years away, the Earth's climate will be warmer than it's been in over 100,000 years. If we don't do something, there will be enormous calamities in a very short time." Earth Day founder Denis Hayes suggested that without an environmental revolution, man could cause "planetary death."

Biologist Larry Harris stood in Florida predicting "the sea will come up about one foot within the next 25 to 40 years. That means that the edge of the sea, that we're standing on today, will occur 10 miles north of here by about the year 2010." Florida hasn't exactly

suffered a dramatic loss of land mass in the last 20 years, as the show suggested in a animated section, in which Cape Cod and Long Island also shrunk dramatically. Lester Brown of the Worldwatch Institute saw doom even earlier, in the 1990s: “The future food security of the world is becoming more and more questionable. We could see food security replace military security as the principal preoccupation of many governments in the world during the 1990s.”

PBS glorified Earth Day, complete with school kids in 1970 organized to sing “Oil drops are falling on their heads/ And that surely means that soon they will all be dead.” In one definitive passage, the narrator, actor Roy Scheider, insisted humans have poisoned the planet with pollution, made waterways unusable, and created “unmanageable piles of garbage filled with the squandered resources of the planet.”



Man is overpopulating and will have trouble surviving from farmland “eroded to the breaking point,” he concluded. “It will be a world in which wild things have no room to live. A world in which forests have disappeared. Only the environmental revolution can save the planet from this fate.” Over the entire series, not a single skeptical scientist or politician was interviewed to challenge these lame predictions.

16. PBS airs a fawning Fidel Castro documentary hosted by Saul Landau, who feels “a mild ecstasy” when Castro touches him (1990)

Nobody Listened, an anti-Castro film by Oscar-winning cinematographer Nestor Almendros, was rejected by PBS for two years. Marc Weiss, producer of *P.O.V.*, a series dedicated to films with a point of view, rejected the film twice for “presenting point of view as fact.” *Frontline* was no better. According to *Washington Times* TV critic Don Kowet, one producer told Almendros that “*Frontline* does not co-produce anti-communist programs.”

PBS finally allowed *Nobody Listened* on the air on August 8, 1990 — when Minneapolis PBS station KTCA “balanced” it with *The Uncompromising Revolution*, a bald-faced Castro propaganda film by Saul Landau of the radical Institute for Policy Studies. Landau made no bones about the source of his inspiration: “There is no doubt who is directing this revolution, or this film.” Instead of journalism, he uncorked infatuated lines like this: “Fidel touched his young machine adjuster, and the man enjoyed a mild ecstasy. I know the feeling. He has inspired the majority with his charisma to believe, that despite the abundance of everyday problems, they can and must achieve monumental leaps in development and play a key role in the world, as well.”

He touted how Castro wanted to build a society “modeled on the ideals of the legendary Che Guevara....Fidel appeals to the masses to be like Che, but Che Guevara was a revolutionary saint. Most Cubans cannot aspire to such status.”

Even as the Soviet empire crumbled and Castro refused to budge, Landau insisted: “It is not easy to disagree with Fidel. He has defined revolutionary democracy as mass participation. It has also meant following him through action-packed decades of experiments in collective survival and socialist living. A veritable force of nature, Fidel has guided the revolution, destroying the old and building the new Cuba. His power has blown through the island with hurricane force.”

The PBS host, moonlighting NPR anchor Scott Simon, introduced the film by insisting, “If you make the trip from Mexico, you might notice first the well-fed, well-cared-for children, and the absence of beggars and shanty towns in contrast to so much of the rest of Latin America.”

17. NPR legal reporter Nina Totenberg proclaims she’s “ashamed of my country” after it was revealed that major terrorism suspects were housed in secret CIA prisons (2005)

On November 2, 2005, *The Washington Post* published leaks from within the CIA that the agency had a series of secret prisons for terrorist suspects. In September 2006, President Bush acknowledged a small number of high-level terrorism suspects were held by the CIA, including 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Muhammad. But the 2005 *Post* report was limited. Reporter Dana Priest acknowledged: “Virtually nothing is known about who is kept in the facilities, what interrogation methods are employed with them, or how decisions are made about whether they should be detained or for how long. “

Nevertheless, NPR legal reporter Nina Totenberg quickly decided this entire program sickened her and made her ashamed of the United States. On the November 4 edition of the PBS show *Inside Washington*, she proclaimed: “I just want to say: Who are we? We are people who have always been for inspections of prisons, for some degree of human rights and now we’re defending neither.”

Evan Thomas of *Newsweek* suggested it was warranted right after 9/11, and Totenberg added. “I agree, and I don’t blame anybody for anything that was done in the first six months to a year. But this is after that and we keep expanding the program. We have now violated everything that we stand for. It is the first time in my life I have been ashamed of my country.”

The idea that the Bush administration felt this program helped contain mass murderers like KSM and glean information on planned new attacks didn't seem to enter Totenberg's mind. Neither did the concept that information from enhanced interrogation techniques might eventually lead to the hideout of Osama bin Laden.

18. NPR secures President Clinton interview as Troopergate breaks, but instead of asking if he abused his office, they ask Clinton why the troopers would be disloyal to him (1993)

On December 20, 1993, The *Los Angeles Times* and *The American Spectator* broke the story that Arkansas state troopers said then-Gov. Bill Clinton had used them to secure sexual liaisons with women, NPR treated it much differently than Nina Totenberg's charges against Clarence Thomas. With a Democrat in the hot seat, caution and dismay took over.

On the December 21 *All Things Considered*, NPR's Mara Liasson relayed Hillary Clinton calling them "trash for cash." and "outrageous, terrible stories and attacks on her family." Anchor Linda Wertheimer asked "What do we know about these troopers? I mean, how believable, how unbelievable are they?" Liasson underlined they were out for money and revenge: "They both acknowledge that they're interested in writing a book about their story and getting money for it. They're also represented by Cliff Jackson....one of the president's bitterest enemies."

The next night, Liasson and Wertheimer interviewed President Clinton. Instead of asking him if the allegations were true, Wertheimer asked why the troopers would be so disloyal: "We know these men have been aided and advised by people who are political enemies of yours, but we also know that these men worked very closely with you for a long period of time. Why do you think they're doing this?" Clinton denied he'd abused his office and said "I just don't think I should say any more about it." Wertheimer then asked why he made calls to old trooper buddies to keep tabs on the tattlers: "I wonder why you did that?" He declined to answer: "I just don't want to — don't want to do anything to prolong this."

Neither did NPR. Wertheimer changed the subject to how Clinton was at "58 percent in the polls" and had an "up-and-down" first year. "Is this just the nature of trying to govern in the '90s or do you think it's something about you that causes it to happen?" She grew even softer, telling Clinton his election was "a personal milestone for many people of my age," and she was up in the middle of the night thinking "I wonder if President Clinton wakes up at three o'clock in the morning sometimes and thinks 'I am the president'?"

19. PBS's *Frontline* touted a partisan conspiracy theory accusing the 1980 Reagan campaign of delaying the release of U.S. hostages, but the evidence crumbled (1991)

On April 17, 1991 the PBS documentary series *Frontline* aired a documentary investigating what *The New York Times* suggested was “The Election Story of the Decade.” But the reality never lived up to the hyperbole. Liberals pushed the conspiracy theory that the Reagan campaign in 1980 secretly plotted to delay the release of the U.S. hostages in Iran to prevent an “October Surprise” for Jimmy Carter. This led to 27 network news stories (and several special episodes of ABC's *Nightline*) casting ethical aspersions on the Reagan campaign. But the tale of their alleged “lawlessness and recklessness” unraveled.

In November of 1991, the magazines *Newsweek* and *The New Republic* found them factually unsupportable. *Newsweek* reported that this conspiracy theory began with followers of extremist Lyndon LaRouche, *Frontline* spent more than \$200,000 (yes, part of that taxpayer money) promoting the crackpot theory in their first documentary. Reporter John Barry insisted “Normal journalism got suspended, and you had a situation where journalists, in effect, became the conduits and collaborators of the sources they were meant to be checking.” In *The New Republic*, Steven Emerson called it “one of the largest hoaxes and fabrications in American journalism.”

In a second *Frontline* documentary on April 7, 1992, PBS admitted: “Some self-proclaimed witnesses to an arms-for-hostages deal have turned out to be not credible at all.” Then they shifted course to try and save face, investigating whether “Republican contacts with Iranians did exist, but were intended not to delay a hostage release, but to win their release as early as possible.” The PBS broadcast ended with yet another theory: that the CIA sent out their star witness Richard Brenneke to lie and discredit October Surprise investigations. *Frontline* never really apologized for these very expensive (and potentially ruinous) falsehoods.

20. NPR's Terry Gross giggles through an interview with Al Franken, but days later, interviews Bill O'Reilly and hammers him with rough questions until he left the studio (2003)

On September 3, 2003, the NPR show *Fresh Air* publicized Al Franken and his book *Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them: A Fair and Balanced Look at the Right*. The show's host, Terry Gross, giggled along with Franken as he talked of being sued by Fox News Channel

for the title. She never asked: Can a book exposing “Lies” and “Liars” use lying tactics in the book?

Gross asked him to read from a letter he wrote to conservative leaders on Harvard letterhead telling them he was writing a pro-abstinence book called *Savin’ It* and asking for input, but she didn’t wonder if that “prank” contradicted or undercut the effectiveness of Franken’s title.

She didn’t ask about the comic strip inside the Franken book called “The Gospel of Supply-Side Jesus” or his trip to Bob Jones University with a fake son to try and trip up the Christians and suggest they’d bend their religious rules for some major donations, which he called “A good honest day’s work done, lying to God-fearing people.” She did express concern that Democrats weren’t being as harsh as Franken toward President Bush. Franken asserted Bush was lying daily.

Gross invited on Bill O’Reilly on October 8, and the contrast was stunning. There was no giggling, only punching. Gross asked about a fight the two authors had at a book expo: “And I want to read something Franken says about that in his book. He says ‘I was having fun not because I enjoy attacking people gratuitously but because O’Reilly is a bully and he deserved it. On his show he cuts off anyone who disagrees with him. If they stand up for themselves, he shoots them down.’ Do you think that that’s fair? Do you think it’s fair to call you a bully on your show?” She went on to attack him with other critical quotes from liberals.

O’Reilly walked out. Gross read more criticisms to his empty chair. NPR ombudsman Jeffrey Dvorkin ruled: “Unfortunately, the interview only served to confirm the belief, held by some, in NPR’s liberal media bias....by coming across as a pro-Franken partisan rather than a neutral and curious journalist, Gross did almost nothing that might have allowed the interview to develop.”

Conclusion

Republican members of Congress who’ve led the charge to defund the CPB often sidestep the glaring issue of leftist bias, insisting instead that the rationale for defunding is that NPR and PBS have strong, attractive brands that can survive without federal support. By contrast, Democrats have long sounded an ideological alarm in defense of its own territory.

Back in 1995, PBS president Ervin Duggan had planted the thought that the Republicans were “pimps of privatization.” In a speech before the National Press Club, Duggan declared that “ideologues” should not be allowed to privatize public broadcasting: “Cooler heads must prevail. We must think about this before we commit a kind of murder.” But if privatization is equivalent to murder, then public broadcasting marinates in a very strong statist ideology.

Because of its taxpayer subsidies and its ideological stance expressing horror at commercial TV and radio, it’s politically natural that public broadcasting would become a liberal playground, omitting conservative stars and programs. Careful analysis of PBS and NPR content from news executives or CPB officials could offset this tilt, and create a fairer, more balanced set of networks with bipartisan support.

But all the evidence since passage of the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 shows that the idea of any official seeking balance is strictly forbidden. Instead, long-standing CPB policy holds that Congress should be ignored and walled off from raising any objections about bias. In 2005, CPB chairman Kenneth Tomlinson resigned under controversy for daring to attempt a secret analysis of PBS and NPR content.

Defunding CPB would not stop liberal bias, since the NPR and PBS networks are well-entrenched and would continue, even after defunding. But denying taxpayer dollars would stop the outrage of conservatives (and Americans in general) being forced to fund fervent attacks on them and their precious beliefs with their own hard-earned pay.

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