

Notable Quotables



Bringing Political Balance
to the Media

May 29, 2000 (Vol. Thirteen; No. 11)

A bi-weekly compilation of the latest outrageous,
sometimes humorous, quotes in the liberal media.

Lazio: Already Being Scolded

"Have we seen the tenor of what this campaign is going to be, because he [Rick Lazio] came out with all barrels firing yesterday when he accused her, he said she's no more a New Democrat than she is a New Yorker. Is this what this campaign's going to be about?"

— *Face the Nation* host **Bob Schieffer** to New York Governor **George Pataki**, May 21.

"The *Daily News* today has a quotation from one of yours, here it is, a fundraising letter of yours: 'We cannot allow Hillary Clinton and her friends to destroy everything we worked so hard for.' Is this going to be a nasty campaign against Hillary Clinton?"

— **ABC's Cokie Roberts** to Pataki, May 21 *This Week*.

"Mr. Lazio presents himself as a moderate, and he has that reputation chiefly because he's pro-choice, but he voted with the Gingrich Congress to shut down the government. He voted, I believe, to abolish the Department of Education. So she could tie him to the Republicans in Washington in a way that she couldn't tie Rudy Giuliani."

— *Newsweek's Eleanor Clift* on *The McLaughlin Group*, May 20.

If They Can Fake It, We'll Sell It

Tom Brokaw: "NBC News 'In Depth' tonight. Together again, Bill and Hillary Clinton, the picture of harmony last night as the First Lady was officially nominated to run for the U.S. Senate from New York..."

Andrea Mitchell: "...Even long-time political associates concede it is an amazing story of political re-invention. The ultimate power couple. The first First Lady to run for office and the President who cancels two Washington fundraisers at the last minute to be with her...Critics may call it a power trip, but the bottom line, friends say, is that this couple has banded together once again, politically and emotionally."

— *May 17 NBC Nightly News*.

More Reporters, More Bias

"Handgun Control. There are 200 million guns in this country and common sense leads you down to the path irrevocably of deciding that more guns, more violence."

— *Chicago Tribune* Washington Bureau Chief **James Warren** answering the question "Which side has the more defensible position on guns, the NRA or Handgun Control Inc.?" on the *May 20 McLaughlin Group*.

Million Mom Media March

"I've got here a pile of all the gun legislation that's been proposed in the past year since we were here before. None of it has passed. By my count, we have more states rejecting new gun control legislation than have passed it. We have 15 states that have passed prohibitions on cities suing gun manufacturers. That hardly seems like progress."
— **ABC's Charles Gibson** to President Clinton during a *May 12 Good Morning America* town meeting promoting the Million Mom March.

"Why are you only focusing on licensing and registration? Why aren't you going for more than that? Why aren't you going, for example, for a total ban?"

— **CBS's Bryant Gumbel** to march organizer **Gail Powers of California**, *May 12 The Early Show*.

"Following the tragedy in your country, you were able to get a total ban on all handguns. How'd you do it?"

— **Gumbel** to a woman whose daughter was killed in the **Dunblane, Scotland shooting**, *May 12 The Early Show*.

"The Million Mom Marcher's platform is admittedly moderate. Do you think it's too moderate, that it doesn't go far enough? They will be the first to say we don't want to come into your home and remove your guns, we want sensible gun laws."

— **NBC's Soledad O'Brien** to Maryland Lieutenant Governor **Kathleen Kennedy Townsend**, *May 14 MSNBC coverage of the march*.

"Who are we? We are the mothers of America. We are the people who ate protein during our pregnancies....Don't dare tell us that we don't have the right to keep those children safe. We are the people who put latches on the kitchen cabinets, baby gates on the stairs, car seats in the back of a minivan....Don't dare tell us that we don't have the right to keep our children safe. But that is exactly what we've been told every time common sense gun legislation has been defeated by the Congress of the United States."

— *Newsweek* columnist **Anna Quindlen** speaking from the podium at the march shown by C-SPAN, *May 14*.

"Yesterday's turnout was impressive by any standard and we may look back on this one as one of those demonstrations that led to real change. The crowd was estimated between half and three quarters of a million people, far beyond anyone's expectations."

— **Bob Schieffer**, *May 15 CBS Evening News*.

Nice Spin of the Wheelchair

Dan Rafter: "On the face of it, it might not seem very fair, a mismatch to say the least: a man who made a name for himself pretending to punch out opponents taking on the disabled...."

Bob Schieffer: "Well, Dan, you had to wonder why rich, popular movie star Clint Eastwood would be at the Capitol today taking sides against people in wheelchairs. But there he was, in a hearing room crowded with the disabled."

— **Start of May 18 CBS Evening News story on the hotel-owning actor testifying about lawyer-induced harassment lawsuits under the Americans with Disabilities Act.**

Less Sex, More Liberal Uplift

Matt Lauer to historian Doris Kearns Goodwin: "You talk about the loss of opportunity which frustrates Bill Clinton and also must frustrate the American people. So will the lesson that will be learned out of all this, Doris, be that maybe we go back to a time where we give less scrutiny to a President's personal life, back to the Kennedy and Eisenhower and Roosevelt years?"

Goodwin: "....I hope that the media does go back to that earlier standard. I don't want to talk about this. None of us do. Think about how much more exciting it would be if we were talking about civil rights, education, health care..."

Lauer: "Yeah, but I hope you're right. I hope that the American people would find it more exciting to talk about health care and Social Security and not about these personal peccadilloes."

— **May 23 Today.**

CBS's Anecdotal Advocacy

CBS reporter John Roberts: "Rita Butler is just the sort of person a new study shows gets hit most often by the high cost of prescription drugs: older women above the poverty level who pay more for drugs than any other group."

Butler: "America is the only country that is mean to their senior citizens where medicine is concerned."

Roberts: "But for Rita and 15 million other seniors without prescription drug coverage, relief may finally be on the way."

Bill Clinton: "There is absolutely no reason that we should force seniors to make a choice between their health, their food, or their daily existence."

Roberts: "The Democratic bill, introduced in the Senate today, puts in motion the first attempt to add prescription benefits to Medicare. Republicans recently announced that they too would pursue a drug plan for seniors."

— **CBS Evening News, May 10.**

Blessed with Ridiculous Enemies

"There is luck, there is good luck, and there is the luck of the Clintons. And we know they are lucky because no first couple in history has been as blessed by their enemies as the Clintons have. President Clinton went through an agonizing period of scandal and impeachment in which the public was forced to choose between him, Ken Starr, Newt Gingrich, and the House prosecutors. No wonder Clinton's popularity soared."

— **U.S. News political reporter Roger Simon on Giuliani's infidelity, May 22 issue.**

Jamie's 11-Minute Valentine

"Ask almost anyone in Washington who'd they call if they needed a lawyer who was smart, politically connected and discreet and you'd get one name: Greg Craig....Craig is also known for his passion. Friends describe him as an idealist who wears his heart on his sleeve....Craig's professionalism has also earned him the respect of his fiercest opponents....And in the Elian case Craig is credited with an amazing political balancing act: Working the Justice Department, working the legal system, even working Fidel Castro. Craig has also showed remarkable media savvy when within hours of these photos appearing [raid pictures including gun pointed at Elian] he released these photos [snapshots of Elian and father]. All of which, in this town, earns you the reputation of Washington Super Lawyer. If you need the impossible, call Greg Craig."

— **NBC reporter Jamie Gangel, May 10 Today.**

If PBS Doesn't Do It, Who Will?

Linda Chavez, Center for Equal Opportunity: "If you're someone like me, who lives out in a rural area — if someone breaks into my house and wants to murder or rape me or steal all of my property, it'll take half an hour for a policeman to get to me....Thousands of lives are saved by people being able to protect themselves."

Bonnie Erbe, host and former NBC Radio/Mutual reporter: "And if you look at the statistics, I would bet that you have a greater chance of being struck by lightning, Linda, than living where you live, and at your age, being raped. Sorry."

— **PBS's To the Contrary, May 13.**

"I know and accept your insecurities. And I expect insecure people and especially conservatives to lie and play games....I suggest you get into therapy, otherwise you're going to continue to be miserable and in denial the rest of your life."

— **E-mail from Erbe to Chavez after Chavez quit the show, as reported in the May 23 Washington Post by Howard Kurtz (ellipses in Post).**

Notable Quotables

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