

Notable Quotables

December 18, 2006 (Vol. Nineteen; No. 26)

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



America's
Media Watchdog

THE BEST NOTABLE QUOTABLES OF 2006 The Nineteenth Annual Awards for the Year's Worst Reporting

Welcome to the Media Research Center's annual awards issue, a compilation of the most outrageous and/or humorous news media quotes from 2006 (December 2005 through November 2006). To determine this year's winners, a panel of 58 radio talk show hosts, magazine editors, columnists, editorial writers and media observers each selected their choices for the first, second and third best quote from a slate of five to eight quotes in each category. First place selections were awarded three points, second place choices two points, with one point for the third place selections. Point totals are listed in the brackets at the end of the attribution for each quote. Each judge was also asked to choose a "Quote of the Year" denoting the most outrageous quote of 2006. The winner and top runners-up appear on page eight.

A list of the judges, who were generous with their time, appears on the back page. The MRC's Michelle Humphrey, Karen Hanna and Kristine Looney distributed and counted the ballots, then produced the numerous audio and video clips that accompany the Web-posted version. Brent Baker and Rich Noyes assembled this issue and Michael Gibbons posted the entire package on the MRC's Web site: www.mrc.org.

And please save this date: Thursday, March 29, 2007. At the Media Research Center's 20th Anniversary Gala celebration that night in Washington, DC, the MRC will announce the winners of the *DisHonors Awards of 2007: Roasting the Most Outrageously Biased Liberal Reporters*. Check www.mrc.org in early 2007 for additional information.

Tin Foil Hat Award for Crazy Conspiracy Theories

✓ **Anchor Katie Couric:** "Gas is the lowest it's been all year, a nationwide average of \$2.23 a gallon. It hasn't been that low since last Christmas. But is this an election-year present from President Bush to fellow Republicans?"

Reporter Anthony Mason: "...Gas started going down just as the fall campaign started heating up. Coincidence? Some drivers don't think so."

Man in a car: "And I think it's basically a ploy to sort of get the American people to think, well, the economy is going good, let's vote Republican."

— *CBS Evening News*, October 16. As Mason spoke, the camera zoomed in on the driver's bumper sticker, "GOP: Grand Oil Party." [72 points]

Runners-up:

■ **ABC's Steve Osunsami:** "In many black neighborhoods, they actually believe that white residents sent the barge that destroyed the levee and flooded their communities."

Unidentified black man, in HBO's film by Spike Lee: "They had a bomb. They bombed that sucker."

Osunsami: "To this day, the conspiracy theories are so widely held, director Spike Lee put them on film...."

Spike Lee, director: "As an African-American in this country, I don't put anything past the government."

— *ABC's World News with Charles Gibson*, August 29. [69]

■ "The last time we got a tape from Osama bin Laden was right before the 2004 presidential election. Now here we are, four days away from hearings starting in Washington into the wiretapping of America's telephones without bothering to get a court order or a warrant, and up pops another tape from Osama bin Laden. Coincidence? Who knows."
— **CNN's Jack Cafferty during the 4pm EST hour of *The Situation Room*, January 19.** [59]

■ "Late in the same week that an NSA whistleblower suggests the illicit tapping of American phones is thousands of times larger and thousands of times less focused than the President claims, suddenly we have FBI sources linking stories about Middle Easterners trying to buy vast quantities of untraceable, disposable American cell phones from K-Marts and Target stores. Which, if true, makes the wiretapping look like a good idea and its leakers look like they've already helped terrorists outsmart the eavesdropping. Boy, you can't buy timing like that. I mean it. I'm asking seriously, you can't buy timing like that, right?...We'll never know for sure if that is or is not just an amazing coincidence that it falls right after the whole NSA whistleblower issue comes up but, as we had pointed out here before, the administration sure gets a lot of these breaks."
— **MSNBC's Keith Olbermann to *Time* reporter Mike Allen on the January 13 *Countdown*.** [39]

Blue State Brigade Award for Campaign Reporting

✓ “Vote Democratic, Earn More.”

— **Headline in the May 1 *U.S. News & World Report’s* table of contents, pointing to a story about a campaign to increase the minimum wage. [59 points]**

Runners-up:

■ “There’s nothing this administration won’t do under the guise of battling terrorism....The only way the American people can stop Bush’s imperial expansion of power short is to turn out in massive numbers to take back one or the other body of Congress from Republican control.”

— **Eleanor Clift in her weekly “Capitol Letter” column posted on the *Newsweek* Web site, April 7. [56]**

■ “This word, ‘values,’ ‘values voters,’ which is just driving me nuts. This idea that somehow certain people have a monopoly on values, and that, you know, if you are not with them on these issues, that you somehow [mock tone of horror] ‘don’t share our values,’ and you’re not just wrong, but you’re somehow morally inferior if you’re on the other side. And I hope that this election is going to mark the demise of the ‘values voters,’ this idea that somehow people who feel so strongly about, you know, these so-called traditional values, that they don’t determine the election the way they were seen to have the last time around, and the indications are that they do have less clout this time out.”

— ***Newsweek* Senior Editor Jonathan Alter on MSNBC’s *Imus in the Morning*, October 16. [54]**

■ ***Hotline’s* Chuck Todd:** “Our line here is about 25 or 30 House seats [for the Democrats]. If it gets over 25 or 30 House seats, you’re going to see six Senate seats....”

MSNBC’s Chris Matthews: “Well, that’ll be fantastic news. It’ll be huge news, I should say, because if that happens, then we have a government run by the Democrats, and an executive branch run by the Republicans, President George W. Bush, having to actually negotiate every aspect of national policy, including the war in Iraq.”

— **Exchange at about 7:36pm EST during MSNBC’s election night coverage, November 7. [53]**

Madness of King George Award for Bush Bashing

✓ **Anchor Wolf Blitzer:** “Let’s get some words of wisdom from Jack Cafferty. He’s in New York right now. Jack?”

CNN’s Jack Cafferty: “I don’t know about wisdom, but you’ll get a little outrage. We better all hope nothing happens to Arlen Specter, the Republican head of the Senate Judiciary Committee, because he might be all that’s standing between us and a full-blown dictatorship in this country....Does it concern you that your phone company may be voluntarily providing your phone records to the government without your knowledge or your permission? If it doesn’t, it sure as hell ought to....”

Blitzer: “Words of wisdom, as I said, Jack, outraged, as you clearly are. Thanks very much.”

— **CNN’s *The Situation Room*, May 11. [77 points]**

Runners-up:

■ “We now face what our ancestors faced at other times of exaggerated crisis and melodramatic fear-mongering: A government more dangerous to our liberty than is the enemy it claims to protect us from....We have never before codified the poisoning of habeas corpus, that wellspring of protection from which all essential liberties flow. You, sir, have now befouled that spring. You, sir, have now given us chaos and called it order. You, sir, have now imposed subjugation and called it freedom....These things you have done, Mr. Bush — they would constitute the beginning of the end of America.”

— **Keith Olbermann in a “Special Comment” on the setting up of military trials for terrorists held at Guantanamo Bay, MSNBC’s *Countdown*, October 18. [71]**

■ “[Russia’s Vladimir Putin is] the only one of those leaders who goes in there [the G8 summit] with a commanding popularity among his own people, because he is perceived to be an effective dictator. What we have in this country is a dictator who’s ineffective.”

— ***Newsweek* contributing editor Eleanor Clift on *The McLaughlin Group*, July 15. [59]**

■ “The polite phrase for how so many of us were duped into supporting a war on the false premise that it had something to do with 9/11 is ‘lying by implication.’ The impolite phrase is ‘impeachable offense.’...When those who dissent are told time and time again — as we will be, if not tonight by the President, then tomorrow by his portable public chorus — that he is preserving our freedom, but that if we use any of that freedom, we are somehow un-American; when we are scolded, that if we merely question, we have ‘forgotten the lessons of 9/11;’ look into this empty space behind me and the bipartisanship upon which this administration also did not build, and tell me this: Who has left this hole in the ground? We have not forgotten, Mr. President. You have. May this country forgive you.”

— **MSNBC’s Keith Olbermann on September 11, ending his *Countdown* with a commentary delivered from the site of the World Trade Center. [34]**

Bring Back the Iron Curtain Award

✓ “When outsiders think of Cuba, it’s often the lack of political freedoms and economic power that comes to mind. Cubans who have chosen to stay on the island, however, are quick to point out the positives: safe streets, a rich and accessible cultural life, a leisurely lifestyle to enjoy with family and friends....For all its flaws, life in Castro’s Cuba has its comforts, and unknown alternatives are not automatically more attractive....Many foreigners consider it propaganda when Castro’s government enumerates its accomplishments, but many Cubans take pride in their free education system, high literacy rates and top-notch doctors. Ardent Castro supporters say life in the United States, in contrast, seems selfish, superficial, and — despite its riches — ultimately unsatisfying.”

— **Associated Press writer Vanessa Arrington in an August 4 dispatch, “Some Cubans enjoy comforts of communism.” [83 points]**

Runners-up:

■ **Diane Sawyer:** "It is a world away from the unruly individualism of any American school....Ask them about their country, and they can't say enough."

North Korean girl, in English: "We are the happiest children in the world."

Sawyer to class: "What do you know about America?"

Sawyer voiceover: "We show them an American magazine. They tell us, they know nothing about American movies, American movie stars....and then, it becomes clear that they have seen some movies from a strange place...."

Sawyer to class: "You know *The Sound of Music*?"

Voices: "Yes."

Sawyer, singing with the class: "Do, a deer, a female deer. Re, a drop of golden sun...."

Charles Gibson: "A fascinating glimpse of North Korea."

— **Sawyer reporting from North Korea for ABC's *World News with Charles Gibson*, October 19. [73]**

■ "Mikhail Gorbachev is generally regarded as the man who broke down the 'Iron Curtain' that separated the communist world from the West and thawed the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union."

— **ABC's Claire Shipman beginning a report summarizing Gorbachev's criticisms of current U.S. foreign policy, posted on ABCNews.com July 12. [53]**

■ "Until the beginning of the reform period in the early 1980s, China's socialized medical system, with 'barefoot doctors' at its core, worked public health wonders....Since then, in one of the great policy reversals of modern times, China has dissolved its rural communes, privatized vast swaths of the economy and shifted public health resources away from rural areas and toward the cities."

— ***New York Times* reporter Howard French, January 14. According to a new biography of Mao, the communist dictator who ruled China from 1949 to 1976 "was responsible for well over 70 million deaths in peacetime, more than any other twentieth-century leader." [52]**

Slam Uncle Sam Award

✓ "Our government had turned its energy and attention away from upholding the rule of law and toward creating law-free zones at Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, Haditha, and other places around the world. And let's not forget the sustained assault on women's reproductive freedom and the hijacking of public policy by religious fundamentalism."

— ***New York Times* legal reporter Linda Greenhouse in a June 9 speech at Harvard's Radcliffe Institute. [61 points]**

Runners-up:

■ "Some people who hated Americans set out to kill a lot of us and they succeeded [on 9/11]. Americans are puzzled over why so many people in the world hate us....We're trying to protect ourselves with more weapons. We have to do it, I guess, but it might be better if we figured out how to behave as a nation in a way that wouldn't make so many people in the world want to kill us."

— **CBS's Andy Rooney on *60 Minutes*, September 10. [44]**

■ "I'd like to put this personally, if I can. You're a grandfather. I'm a father. When we look at those girls and we think that the country we're about to pass to them is a country where the Vice President can't say whether or not we have secret prisons around the world, whether water-boarding and mock executions is consistent with our values, and a country where the government is surveilling Americans without the warrant of a court — is that the country we want to pass on to them?"

— **Co-anchor Terry Moran to Vice President Dick Cheney in an interview shown on ABC's *Nightline*, December 19, 2005. [22]**

Damn Those Conservatives Award

✓ "It [Dean's book, *Conservatives Without Conscience*] deals with psychological principles that are frightening and that may have faced other nations at other times in — Germany and Italy in the '30s coming to mind in particular. How does it apply now? And to what degree should it scare us?...This whole edifice requires an enemy — communism, al-Qaeda, Democrats, me, whoever — for the Two-Minute Hate....Are you actually saying here they [conservative Republicans] would set up, encourage, terrorism from other countries to set them up as a bogeyman to have again that group to hate here, that group to more importantly be afraid of here?...This all seems to require not merely venality or immorality, but a kind of amorality where morals don't enter into it at all....You've been at one of the central moments of history in the 20th century. What kind of danger — are we facing a legitimate threat to the concept of democracy in this country?"

— **MSNBC's Keith Olbermann to ex-Nixon White House lawyer John Dean, who claimed in his book that modern conservatives are moving the Republican Party toward "authoritarianism," July 10 *Countdown*. [73 points]**

Runners-up:

■ "Leave it to the right wing to cross the preposterous line just when you think it reached that point long ago. The Media Research Center, an outfit dedicated to proving that every story in the newspapers or on TV is slanted left, every year hands out its DisHonors Award....For this gang to come along with its award is laughable. You could fill a Bible with the mistakes they make in their accusations against the press. They can dish it out but can't take it."

— **Former *Boston Globe* reporter John Mashek in an April 6 posting on the *U.S. News & World Report* Web site. [56]**

■ "I don't think what happened in West Virginia is totally divorced from the K Street project. It was all about deregulation. Tom DeLay fervently and sincerely believes that every regulation — the regulations that have removed 99 percent of lead from the air, the regulations that have saved the Great Lakes — they are a burden and an onerous intrusion upon American business, and I think that what you've seen is Tom DeLay's America in action."

— **Columnist and PBS *NewsHour* panelist Mark Shields, referring to the deaths of 12 West Virginia coal miners, on *Inside Washington*, January 6. Investigators believe the mine explosion was caused by lightning. [55]**

Terrorists Have Rights Too Award for Condemning “Domestic Spying”

✓ “NSA bombshell: A new report that the government is secretly tracking your phone calls, seeking information on every call made in the U.S. The war on terror vs. your privacy.”

— ABC’s Diane Sawyer opening the May 11 *Good Morning America*. Later, ABC’s on-screen graphic warned: “Big Brother: Why is NSA Tracking Your Calls?” [71 points]

Runners-up:

■ “There are laws on the books against what the administration is doing, and it’s about time somebody said it out loud. This federal district judge ruled today President Bush is breaking the law by spying on people in this country without a warrant....It means President Bush violated his oath of office, among other things, when he swore to uphold the Constitution of the United States. It means he’s been lying to us about the program since it started, when he’s been telling us there’s nothing illegal about what he’s doing. A court has ruled it is illegal....I hope it means the arrogant inner circle at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue may finally have to start answering to the people who own that address — that would be us — about how they conduct our country’s affairs.”

— CNN’s Jack Cafferty on the August 17 *Situation Room*, after a Carter-appointed judge ruled that the surveillance of suspected terrorists was unconstitutional. [70]

■ “[The leak] is a victory for the American people....Remember the great American saying, ‘Disobedience to tyranny is obedience to God.’ In this case, it was something that clearly, I think, most Americans would agree is not what we want to do, secret prisons....Exposing something like that does not hurt us. It helps us.”

— ABC’s Sam Donaldson on *This Week*, April 23, discussing the firing of a CIA employee for leaking. [48]

Drowning Polar Bear Award for Promoting Gore’s Inconvenient “Truth”

✓ **Katie Couric:** “In this movie, at different turns you’re funny, vulnerable, disarming, self-effacing, and someone said after watching it, quote, ‘If only he was like this before, maybe things would’ve turned out differently in 2000.’”

Al Gore: “Well, I benefit from low expectations....”

Couric: “What do you see happening in say 15 to 20 years or even 50 years if nothing changes?”

Gore: “...Sea-level increases of 20 feet or more worldwide. Of course, Florida and Louisiana and Texas are particularly vulnerable. The San Francisco Bay area, Manila. And we have seen the impact of a couple hundred thousand refugees from an environmental crisis. [Footage of Hurricane Katrina] Imagine 100 million or 200 million.”

Couric: “Even Manhattan would be in deep water, right?”

Gore: “Yes, in fact the World Trade Center Memorial site would be underwater...Unfortunately, Mother Nature is weighing in very powerfully and very loudly.”

— NBC’s *Today*, May 24. [109 points]

Runners-up:

■ “No one can say exactly what it looks like when a planet takes ill, but it probably looks a lot like Earth....Suddenly and unexpectedly, the crisis is upon us....Something has gone grievously wrong. That something is global warming....It’s undeniable that the White House’s environmental record — from the abandonment of Kyoto to the President’s broken campaign pledge to control carbon output to the relaxation of emission standards — has been dismal.”

— *Time*’s Jeffrey Kluger in the magazine’s April 3 global warming cover story: “Be Worried. Be Very Worried.” [62]

■ “Since his still-controversial loss to George Bush in the 2000 election, [former Vice President Al] Gore has recast himself as a road warrior for the environment. Traveling from town to town, country to country with a message of warning, a message that’s now been made into a movie.... Out of the shadows of yesterday’s news, Al Gore has suddenly emerged as the comeback kid....”

“I’m watching you in this film, you look so comfortable in your own skin. You look like Al Gore in full, as it were.... The box office receipts would indicate that it’s an action movie — you did better per screening than almost anything that’s come out this week.”

— Co-host Harry Smith introducing his interview with Al Gore and some of his comments to Gore on CBS’s *Early Show*, May 31. [46]

■ “He’s [Gore is] campaigning to awaken the political leadership to the threat of global warming, but it’s a campaign that can easily turn into a campaign for himself if he sees an opening. And he’s following the Nixonian play book, the Nixonian in a very good way. Just as Richard Nixon was edged out of the presidency very narrowly in 1960 and then came back after eight years to win.... There’s some regret, even among the media, that Al Gore was mocked and ridiculed in 2000, and he didn’t deserve it. And we’re ready for a serious politician.”

— *Newsweek* contributing editor Eleanor Clift on the May 27 *McLaughlin Group*. [29]

Pain at the Pump Award for Bashing “Big Oil”

✓ **Correspondent Sharyn Alfonsi:** “They’re used to living on fixed incomes, but now skyrocketing gas prices are forcing seniors to make difficult choices. Some are cutting back on medicine, others say they’re eating less. [To retiree Delbert Osborne] What do you think when you fill up your car with gasoline now?”

Delbert Osborne: “I think, ‘Have I got enough money to pay for all this and still get a loaf of bread?’”

Alfonsi: “Fortunately, 91-year-old Delbert Osborne doesn’t drive that much anymore. He relies on Meals on Wheels, a group that’s also in a squeeze. Volunteer drivers, most who are retirees on fixed incomes, are dropping out every day.”

Volunteer: “Do they eat or do they help someone else? You know, that’s a hard decision for them to make.”

— CBS *Evening News*, May 1. [79 points]

Runners-up:

■ “Arlen Specter says Congress should consider taxing the windfall profits being reaped by the oil companies, which I think is a no-brainer. These guys aren’t entrepreneurs — they are pirates.”

— **Geraldo Rivera on Fox’s *Geraldo at Large*, April 24. [75]**

■ **Charles Gibson:** “Today, ExxonMobil reported a profit number so big, it was staggering, even by oil company standards. ABC’s Betsy Stark takes a look at the numbers.”

Reporter Betsy Stark: “The earnings reported today are astounding....Look at it this way: In 30 seconds, the Exxon-Mobil corporation makes about what an average American family earns in an entire year.”

— **ABC’s *World News with Charles Gibson*, July 27. [67]**

■ “The estimates are that the six large U.S. [oil] companies will have a total of \$135 billion in profits for the year 2006. Don’t consumers have a right to be angry?”

“The public looks at a total of \$135 billion over the year, that’s larger than the gross domestic product of Israel, and says isn’t that an obscene amount?”

— **Co-host Charles Gibson to ConocoPhillips Chairman James Mulva on ABC’s *Good Morning America*, May 8. [50]**

Media Hero Award

✓ “You can see it in the crowds. The thrill, the hope. How they surge toward him. You’re looking at an American political phenomenon. In state after state, in the furious final days of this crucial campaign, Illinois Senator Barack Obama has been the Democrat’s not-so-secret get-out-the-vote weapon. He inspires the party faithful, and many others, like no one else on the scene today...And the question you can sense on everyone’s mind, as they listen so intently to him, is he the one? Is Barack Obama the man, the black man, who could lead the Democrats back to the White House and maybe even unite the country?...Everywhere he goes, people want him to run for President, especially in Iowa, cradle of presidential contenders. Around here, they’re even naming babies after him.”

— **Co-anchor Terry Moran profiling Obama on ABC’s *Nightline*, November 6. [85 points]**

Runners-up:

■ “Obama’s personal appeal is made manifest when he steps down from the podium and is swarmed by well-wishers of all ages and hues....Obama seemed the political equivalent of a rainbow — a sudden preternatural event inspiring awe and ecstasy....There aren’t very many people — ebony, ivory or other — who have Obama’s distinctive portfolio of talents....Obama’s candor is reminiscent of John McCain....He transcends the racial divide so effortlessly that it seems reasonable to expect that he can bridge all the other divisions — and answer all the impossible questions — plaguing American public life.”

— ***Time* senior writer Joe Klein in an October 23 cover story headlined, “Why Barack Obama Could Be the Next President.” [59]**

■ “He’s known as a liberal lion, and Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy has roared more than once during his more than 40 years in the Senate. Now Kennedy says America is on the wrong path, and in his new book *America Back on Track*, Kennedy details seven challenges facing this country....You talk about the things that need to be done, Senator, from ‘reclaiming our constitutional democracy, to protecting our national security, to guaranteeing health care for every American.’ Noble, noble goals for sure. Are they do-able, and is there a national will to achieve these things, in your view?”

— **NBC’s Katie Couric to Senator Ted Kennedy on *Today*, April 20. [50]**

■ “You know you are the equivalent of a rock star in politics....Many people, afterwards [after Obama’s 2004 Democratic convention speech], they weren’t sure how to pronounce your name but they were moved by you. People were crying. You tapped into something. You touched people. What did you tap into that, that was missing?...If your party says to you, ‘We need you,’ and, and there’s already a drumbeat out there, will you respond?”

— **Some of co-host Meredith Vieira’s questions to Senator Barack Obama on NBC’s *Today*, October 19. [45]**

Barbra Streisand Political IQ Award for Celebrity Vapidity

✓ “No matter what the greatest tyrant in the world, the greatest terrorist in the world, George W. Bush says, we’re here to tell you: Not hundreds, not thousands, but millions of the American people, millions support your revolution, support your ideas, and we are expressing our solidarity with you.”

— **Singer/activist Harry Belafonte to Venezuela’s left-wing President Hugo Chavez during a televised rally on January 8, in a clip shown the following day on FNC’s *Hannity & Colmes*. [81 points]**

Runners-up:

■ “When they say ‘the terrorists want the Democrats to win,’ you say ‘are you insane? George Bush has been a terrorist’s wet dream.’...When they say that actual combat veterans like John Kerry are ‘denigrating the troops,’ you say ‘you’re completely full of sh*t.’...If I was a troop, the support I would want back home would mainly come in the form of people pressuring Washington to get me out of this pointless nightmare. [applause] That’s how I would feel supported....There’s your talking point. Vote Republican and you vote to enable George Bush to keep ruling as an emperor — a retarded child emperor [laughter], but an emperor.”

— **Bill Maher on his HBO program *Real Time with Bill Maher* November 3, offering his suggested “talking points” for Democratic candidates. [44]**

■ “Failing to warn the citizens of a looming weapon of mass destruction — and that’s what global warming is — in order to protect oil company profits, well, that fits for me the definition of treason.”

— **HBO’s Bill Maher on *Real Time*, March 24. [35]**

Politics of Meaninglessness Award for the Silliest Analysis

✓ “Finally tonight, the Winter Games. Count me among those who don’t like ‘em and won’t watch ‘em. In fact, I figure when Thomas Paine said, ‘These are the times that try men’s souls,’ he must have been talking about the start of another Winter Olympics. Because they’re so trying, maybe over the next three weeks we should all try, too. Like, try not to be incredulous when someone attempts to link these games to those of the ancient Greeks, who never heard of skating or skiing. So try not to laugh when someone says these are the world’s greatest athletes, despite a paucity of blacks that makes the Winter Games look like a GOP convention.”

— Bryant Gumbel on HBO’s *Real Sports*, Feb. 7. [72 points]

Runners-up:

■ “Today, life on Earth is disappearing faster than the days when dinosaurs breathed their last, but for a very different reason....Us *homo sapiens* are turning out to be as destructive a force as any asteroid. Earth’s intricate web of ecosystems thrived for millions of years as natural paradises, until we came along, paved paradise, and put up a parking lot. Our assault on nature is killing off the very things we depend on for our own lives....The stark reality is that there are simply too many of us, and we consume way too much, especially here at home....It will take a massive global effort to make things right, but the solutions are not a secret: control population, recycle, reduce consumption, develop green technologies.”

— NBC’s Matt Lauer hosting *Countdown to Doomsday*, a two-hour June 14 Sci-Fi Channel special. [64]

■ **Katie Couric:** “A passionate student of history, Condi Rice believes turmoil often precedes periods of peace and stability. And she rejects the notion that the U.S. is a bully, imposing its values on the world.”

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice: “What’s wrong with assistance so that people can have their full and complete right to the very liberties and freedoms that we enjoy?”

Couric to Rice: “To quote my daughter, ‘Who made us the boss of them?’”

— CBS’s *60 Minutes*, September 24. [55]

Good Morning Morons Award

✓ “Some of the values, depending on your perspective... may be deemed wholesome, but in other ways, I think, people will see this community as eschewing diversity and promoting intolerance....Do you think the tenets of the community might result in de facto segregation as a result of some of the beliefs that are being espoused by the majority of the residents there?...You can understand how people would hear some of these things and be like, wow, this is really infringing on civil liberties and freedom of speech and right to privacy and all sorts of basic tenets that this country was founded on. Right?”

— NBC’s Katie Couric on the March 3 *Today*, questioning Domino’s Pizza founder Tom Monaghan and real-estate developer Paul Marinelli, who are building a community based on Catholic values in Florida. [79 points]

Runners-up:

■ “You signed a \$13 million book deal, which I understand is bigger than Bill Clinton, Alan Greenspan, and Pope John Paul II, so how do you square your wealth with the tenets of Christianity?...[The Bible] said, this is Matthew 19, verses 23 and 24, ‘Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘I tell you the truth. It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Again, I tell you it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.’”...It makes you wonder about your claim that wealth is a positive thing.”

— Katie Couric, who was set to make \$15 million a year as the new anchor of the *CBS Evening News*, to TV minister Joel Osteen on NBC’s *Today*, May 9. [75]

■ **Co-host Meredith Vieira:** “Everybody’s calling you ‘the Genie,’ and they want you to grant some wishes. If you had a genie, what wish would you want granted?...Where do you think he [Osama bin Laden] is? Everybody’s wondering where the heck he is, where do you think he is?”

Former President Bill Clinton: “I think he’s probably in, I have no intelligence, okay? I think he’s probably-”

Vieira, interrupting: “You have lots of intelligence.”

Clinton: “No, I mean government intelligence.”

Vieira, laughing: “I know, I’m kidding.”

— NBC’s *Today*, September 21. [57]

■ “Think global warming isn’t real? Ask Manny the Mammoth, Diego the Tiger or Sid the Sloth....The herd’s 88 happy minutes will melt away your out-of-theater cares while attesting that global warming is no snow job.”

— NBC movie critic Gene Shalit reviewing the cartoon movie *Ice Age: The Meltdown*, March 29 *Today*. [45]

Cranky Dinosaur Award for Trashing the New Media

✓ “A past President, bullied and sandbagged by a monkey posing as a newscaster, finally lashed back....The nation’s marketplace of ideas is being poisoned by a propaganda company so blatant that Tokyo Rose would’ve quit....As with all the other nefariousness and slime of this, our worst presidency since James Buchanan, he [President Bush] is having it done for him, by proxy. Thus, the sandbag effort by Fox News Friday afternoon.”

— Keith Olbermann referring to Bill Clinton’s interview with *Fox News Sunday* host Chris Wallace, MSNBC’s *Countdown*, September 25. [90 points]

Runners-up:

■ “It didn’t exactly represent a profile in courage for the Vice President to wander over there to the F-word network for a sit-down with Brit Hume. I mean, that’s a little like Bonnie interviewing Clyde, ain’t it?...I mean, running over there to the Fox network to, I mean, that’s — talk about seeking a safe haven. He’s not going to get any high hard ones from anybody at the F-word network. I think we know that.”

— Jack Cafferty during the 4pm EST hour of CNN’s *The Situation Room*, February 15. [70]

■ **Substitute host Kathleen Matthews:** “Evan, nothing has lit up the telephones on talk radio more than this Dubai ports deal. Why did it resonate so much with the American people?”

Newsweek Assistant Managing Editor Evan Thomas: “Because it’s something that simple idiots can understand [other panelists snicker]. I mean, it was an idiotic issue, and it is a classic for talk radio. You can get it on a bumper sticker. But I’m with the elites on this one. It was really, it was ridiculous. We need Dubai as an ally. On balance, it would be better that the deal went through, but it was an easy one to demagogue on talk radio.”

— Exchange on *Inside Washington*, March 10. [47]

■ “The kind of hateful speech that we have seen, on the floor of the United States Congress and in a lot of the blogosphere, is what seems to dominate. And I do think it goes back, in my own experience, to 1989 when the talk radio shows went crazy about the congressional pay raise which was supported by Common Cause and some other groups in Washington who felt there needed to be a higher-paid salary....The anti-Washington, anti-bureaucrat bias that was built into that debate was then taken up by cable talk hosts as well and that became the kind of really combative conversation that displaced reasoned discussions about controversial issues.”

— NBC reporter **Andrea Mitchell** appearing on PBS’s *Washington Week*, July 7. [36]

State of Denial Award for Refusing to Acknowledge Liberal Bias

✓ **Ex-CBS anchor Dan Rather:** “We had a lot, a lot, of corroboration of what we broadcast about President Bush’s military record. It wasn’t just the documents. But it’s a very old technique used, that when those who don’t like what you’re reporting believe it can be hurtful, then they look for the weakest spot and attack it, which is fair enough. It’s a diversionary technique.”

CNN’s Larry King: “You’re saying that was a fair report, I mean that was — you believe that report to this day?”

Rather: “Do I believe the truth of the story? Absolutely.”

— Discussing **Rather’s 2004 60 Minutes** story that relied on forged documents to challenge Bush’s National Guard record, *CNN’s Larry King Live*, July 12. [102 points]

Runners-up:

■ “I know that I’ve tried my best through my career to ask challenging questions to whomever I’m speaking, and whether it’s a Republican or a Democrat, I try to raise important issues depending on their particular position.... Oftentimes people put their, they see you from their own individual prisms. And if you’re not reflecting their point of view, or you’re asking an antagonistic question of someone they might agree with in terms of policy, they see you as the enemy, and I think that’s just a mistake....You have Fox, which espouses a particular point of view.”

— Incoming *CBS Evening News* anchor **Katie Couric** at the Aspen Ideas Festival on July 5, broadcast by C-SPAN on September 2. [70]

■ “[I am] biased — I have a very strong bias toward independent journalism....Some of what you describe as ‘baggage’ comes from people who have the following view: Their view is, ‘You report the news the way I want it reported or I’m going to make you pay a price and hang a sign around your neck saying you’re a bomb-toting Bolshevik.’”

— **Ex-CBS anchorman Dan Rather**, as quoted by the *Washington Post’s* **Lisa de Moraes** in a July 12 column. [56]

Recognizing the Obvious Award for Admitting There’s Liberal Media Bias

✓ **Former Washington Post reporter Thomas Edsall:** “I agree that the — whatever you want to call it, mainstream media — presents itself as unbiased when, in fact, there are built into it many biases and they are overwhelmingly to the left.”

Host Hugh Hewitt: “Well, that’s very candid....Given that number of reporters out there, is it ten to one Democrat to Republican? Twenty to one Democrat to Republican?”

Edsall: “It’s probably in the range of 15 to 25:1 Democrat....There is a real difficulty on the part of the mainstream media being sympathetic, or empathetic, whatever the word would be, to the kind of thinking that goes into conservative approaches to issues. I think the religious right has been treated as sort of an alien world.”

— Exchange on **Hugh Hewitt’s syndicated radio show** September 21, audio later posted at TownHall.com. [96 points]

Runners-up:

■ **Radio host Hugh Hewitt:** “And so everyone that you work with, or 95 percent of people you work with, are old liberals.”

ABC News Political Director Mark Halperin: “I don’t know if it’s 95 percent, and unfortunately, they’re not all old. There are a lot of young liberals here, too. But it certainly, there are enough in the old media, not just in ABC, but in old media generally, that it tilts the coverage quite frequently, in many issues, in a liberal direction, which is completely improper....It’s an endemic problem. And again, it’s the reason why for 40 years, conservatives have rightly felt that we did not give them a fair shake.”

— Exchange on *The Hugh Hewitt Show*, October 30. [91]

■ “If I were a conservative, I understand why I would feel suspicious that I was not going to get a fair break.... The mindset at ABC, where you and I used to be colleagues at, at the other big news organizations, it’s just too focused on being more favorable to Nancy Pelosi, say, than Newt Gingrich; being more down on the Republicans’ chances than perhaps is warranted; singling out — you’re seeing here a *60 Minutes* piece about Nancy Pelosi. I don’t remember Newt Gingrich getting a piece that favorable in 1994.”

— **ABC Political Director Mark Halperin**, co-author of *The Way to Win*, on *FNC’s The O’Reilly Factor*, October 24. [82]

Quote of the Year

✓ "It wasn't supposed to be this way. You weren't supposed to be graduating into an America fighting a misbegotten war in a foreign land. You weren't supposed to be graduating into a world where we are still fighting for fundamental human rights, whether it's the rights of immigrants to start a new life, or the rights of gays to marry, or the rights of women to choose. You weren't supposed to be graduating into a world where oil still drove policy and environmentalists have to fight relentlessly for every gain. You weren't. But you are. And for that, I'm sorry."

— From *New York Times* Publisher Arthur Sulzberger, Jr.'s May 21 graduation address at the State University of New York at New Paltz, shown on C-SPAN May 27.

Runners-up:

■ **Co-host Rosie O'Donnell:** "As a result of the [9/11] attack and the killing of nearly 3,000 innocent people, we invaded two countries and killed innocent people in their countries."

2006 Award Judges

Lee Anderson, Associate Publisher, *Chattanooga Times Free Press*
Chuck Asay, editorial cartoonist, *The Gazette* in Colorado Springs
Brent H. Baker, MRC's Vice President for Research & Publications
Mark Belling, radio talk show host, WISN-AM in Milwaukee
Neal Boortz, nationally syndicated radio talk show host
L. Brent Bozell III, President of the Media Research Center
Priscilla L. Buckley, contributing editor for *National Review*
Bill Cotterell, political editor at the *Tallahassee Democrat*
Blanquita Cullum, Radio America broadcaster
Bill Cunningham, radio talk show host, WLW in Cincinnati
Midge Decter, author
Bob Dutko, radio talk show host, WMUZ in Detroit
Jim Eason, San Francisco radio talk show host emeritus
Don Feder, author, media consultant at Don Feder & Associates
Ryan Frazier, commentary editor, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*
John Fund, columnist for OpinionJournal.com
Mike Gallagher, syndicated radio host, Fox News contributor
Greg Garrison, radio talk show host, WIBC in Indianapolis
David Gold, radio talk show host, KSFO in San Francisco
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Michael Graham, radio talk show host, WTKK in Boston
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Steven Greenhut, columnist, *Orange County Register*
Kirk Healy, Executive Producer, WDBO Radio in Orlando
Matthew Hill, Vice President at WPWT, Tri-Cities of Tenn/Va
Quin Hillyer, Senior Editor, *The American Spectator*
Fred Honsberger, radio talk show host, KDKA in Pittsburgh
Jeff Jacoby, columnist for the *Boston Globe*
Marie Kaigler, mass media and developmental consultant, Detroit
Cliff Kincaid, Editor, Accuracy in Media

For links to each judge's Web page, check the posted version of this issue at www.mediaresearch.org

• **Co-host Elisabeth Hasselbeck:** "But do you understand that, that the belief funding those attacks, okay, that is widespread. And if you take radical Islam and if you want to talk about what's going on there, you have to—"

• **O'Donnell, interrupting:** "Wait just one second. Radical Christianity is just as threatening as radical Islam [loud applause] in a country like America where we have a separation of church and state. We're a democracy."

• — Exchange on ABC's *The View*, September 12.

• ■ "I don't support our troops....When you volunteer for the U.S. military, you pretty much know you're not going to be fending off invasions from Mexico and Canada. So you're willingly signing up to be a fighting tool of American imperialism, for better or worse....I'm not advocating that we spit on returning veterans like they did after the Vietnam War, but we shouldn't be celebrating people for doing something we don't think was a good idea."

• — *Los Angeles Times* columnist and former *Time* staff writer Joel Stein in a January 24 column.

Mark Larson, radio talk show host, KOGO in San Diego

Jason Lewis, radio talk show host, KTLK in Minneapolis

Kathryn Jean Lopez, Editor of *National Review Online*

Patrick McGuigan, contributing editor for the *MidCity Advocate* (Oklahoma City) and *Tulsa Today*

Vicki McKenna, radio talk show host, WIBA in Madison, WI

Colin McNickle, editorial page editor, *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

Joe McQuaid, Publisher of the *New Hampshire Union Leader*

Wes Minter, radio talk show host and business executive

Paul Mirengoff, co-author of PowerLine blog

Robert D. Novak, syndicated columnist for the *Chicago Sun-Times*

Rich Noyes, Director of Research, Media Research Center

Kate O'Beirne, Washington Editor of *National Review*

Marvin Olasky, journalism professor University of Texas at Austin; Editor-in-Chief of *World* magazine

Henry Payne, editorial cartoonist, *The Detroit News*

Wladyslaw Pleszczynski, Editorial Director, *The American Spectator*

Michael Reagan, nationally syndicated radio talk show host

Chris Reed, editorial writer, *San Diego Union-Tribune*

Mike Rosen, radio talk show host, KOA in Denver; columnist for the *Rocky Mountain News*

William A. Rusher, Distinguished Fellow, Claremont Institute

Tom Sullivan, radio talk show host, KFBK in Sacramento

James Taranto, Editor of OpinionJournal.com

Cal Thomas, syndicated columnist; panelist on FNC's *News Watch*

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr., Editor-in-Chief, *The American Spectator*

Chris Warden, Hall School of Journalism, Troy University

Clay Waters, Editor of the MRC's TimesWatch.org

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Martha Zoller, radio talk show host for WDUN in Gainesville, GA

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