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NBC Replaces Brokaw on Meet the Press With Reporter Known for Bashing Bush, Defending Clintons

David Gregory, 'Custodian' of NBC's Biases

As the baton passed to David Gregory at NBC's *Meet the Press*, NBC couldn't stop from shamelessly selling itself as a gift to America. On Monday's *Today*, Tom Brokaw exclaimed about filling the late Tim Russert's shoes: "It's a great legacy and he'll remain a presence of that, but Tim would be the first to say we were all temporary custodians of a national treasure."

How did David Gregory earn this new position? Most viewers know him largely as an arrogant question-yeller at Bush White House press conferences.

Take this exchange with Scott McClellan on the Plame leak probe on July 11, 2005: "This is ridiculous. The notion that you're going to stand before us after having commented with that level of detail and tell people watching this that somehow you decided not to talk. You've got a public record out there. Do you stand by your remarks from that podium, or not?...Why are you choosing when it's appropriate and when it's inappropriate [to comment]?" McClellan replied: "If you'll let me finish," but Gregory insisted: "No, you're not finishing! You're not saying anything!"

Bye-Bye, Bush. Gregory is another journalist to rise through the ranks by bad-mouthing Republicans and defending the Democrats. He lectured President Bush in a May 18, 2006 interview shown on MSNBC's *Hardball*: "In the most recent survey, your disapproval rating is now one point lower than Richard Nixon's before he resigned the presidency....Do you think it's possible that, like Nixon and Watergate, that the American people have rendered a final judgment of disapproval on you and your war in Iraq?"

But when Karl Rove joked that liberals wanted to respond to 9/11 with indictments and therapy, Gregory was insulted, declaring on the June 23, 2005 *Hardball*: "Is

there a danger...in trivializing, for instance, Guantanamo Bay, the treatment of detainees? When you send Dick Cheney out, the Vice President, to say 'let's remember they're all bad people,' and when you send such a lightning rod like Karl Rove out to say that the Left wanted to subject the 9/11 terrorists to therapy, doesn't that sort of caricature what are important debates in the country?"

Some Questions Gregory Won't Allow

Cliff May, RNC: "We have right now a credible allegation by Juanita Broaddrick that while Attorney General, Bill Clinton sexually assaulted her and he won't answer."

Fill-in MSNBC host David Gregory: "Now hold on. You know what, Cliff? I'm not going to let you go there. We are not talking about this today. We're not going to turn that into this. I want to go around the horn a little bit. Cliff, wait a minute. Cliff, I'm going to stop you. I'm hosting the program. It is not a double standard. We have a clear focus today. I'm asking the questions."

-- MSNBC discussion on whether George W. Bush used cocaine, August 19, 1999.

Gregory identified Cheney as a villain during September 1, 2004 convention coverage: "One of the obstacles for Dick Cheney tonight is the fact that he has become a dark figure....There are those who believe that Dick Cheney has led this administration and this President down a path of recklessness, that maybe his approach, his dark approach to this constant battle against another civilization, is actually the wrong approach for ultimately keeping America safe."

Poor, Poor Hillary. Gregory sounded like Geraldo Rivera on CNBC's *Rivera Live* on August 9, 1999, as Whitewater counsel Robert Ray began dismissing any idea of Hillary Clinton indictments. Gregory displayed outrage: "If this trail is cold and nothing adds up to indictment, does this become anything but a smear job against Hillary Clinton at the worst possible moment for her politically?"

Gregory promised Monday "I'm gonna be focused on trying to live up to the values and the integrity of this program, making this a place for tough questions, accountability, fairness, and also respect to our guests here." Fairness for Republicans and tough questions for Democrats aren't always NBC policy. — *Tim Graham*

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