

# Brent Bozell



*Honored as always to speak with the founder and president of the [Media Research Center](#), the stalwart conservative warrior who's been holding the media's feet to the fire for almost thirty years:*

**RUSH:** Hey, Brent, how are you doing?

**BOZELL:** Rush. How are you, buddy?

**RUSH:** I am fine, and I appreciate your taking time to do this.

**BOZELL:** My pleasure.

**RUSH:** I just completed my 27th year here. You started the Media Research Center in '87, a year before me. You've got 28 years in, trying to stop the media, or alert people to the media, or educate people to the media. Honestly, how do you see your mission to date? And going forward, how do you stay enthused?

**BOZELL:** You won't remember this, I bet, but you and I had a conversation very early on in this adventure. You asked me, "What

is your end goal?" I said, "To win, to close down the MRC, and get a real job." You laughed and said, "Then you'll never have a real job," your point being that this problem is never going to go away.

I got a call from one of our supporters just a few years ago. He said, "In the last four years, I have given you over \$1 million, and I'm looking at a letter from you saying that the media are worse than ever." He asked, "How well is my investment working?" Here's the point. It's not how liberal the media are. The question is: How much are they believed, how much are they trusted? You're never going to stop the press from being left-wing. You can't do a thing to stop that. But what you can do is expose their lack of credibility. You have to do it every single day. That's what motivates me, because it works.

**RUSH:** What evidence do you have of that? I'm not being argumentative — these are questions I ask myself. As I get older, I get more introspective, and there are days I get down. I really do. After 27 years, I look at the low-information voter, and I think of myself as having had no impact whatsoever on them, absolutely zero. It's always motivating, but sometimes it still gets to be a little frustrating.

**BOZELL:** The polls tell me that our efforts are working, and when I say "our," it is not just the Media Research Center. It is everyone who speaks out to this. Of course, you've got the biggest audience of them all. But if you look at the public's perception in 1987, when we started this organization, a survey showed that 75 percent of the public believed that what they were getting was objective truth. I've seen polls showing up to 89 percent of the public now believe it's subjective opinion. So the numbers have flipped completely.

If you look at a [Quinnipiac poll](#) that came out very recently, they first asked: Which is the most trustworthy network? No. 1 was Fox. CNN was at 22 percent, NBC and CBS had 10 percent, ABC was at 8 percent, and MSNBC was at 7 percent. Then they asked: How much do you trust each of these networks? ABC, NBC, and CBS had a "great deal" trust factor of 14 percent. CNN was 18 percent. They're not trusted anymore, and if they're not trusted, then what they say doesn't have as great an impact.

**RUSH:** I see that they rate lower than Congress in respect. I actually think you have had a profound impact by what you do. I think it would be seen if we had an opposition Party that reflected it and acted on it, rather than acted as though they were in a permanent minority with no chance at winning.

The left's goal has always been to silence and eliminate opposition. They have no interest in debating us, they have no interest in coming to compromises with us or bipartisan solutions to anything. They want to use the power of government and the courts to completely obliterate their opposition — political, journalistic, what have you. I don't think the Republican Party understands what it's

up against. If they did, you wouldn't be a lone wolf trying to do what you're doing. If there were a genuine pushback, a genuine opposition Party that gave not just lip service to opposition, but actually tried to stop this stuff, I think you'd see a lot more public support for conservative issues, Republican Party issues, than you do.

**BOZELL:** I couldn't agree more. I've told this to Republican leaders so many times I could cry: "The next time you go on air and someone lies, stop them in midsentence on live television and point out they just lied. They'll never do it to you again." But they are so afraid of the press, they don't dare do that.

Look who isn't afraid of the press. His name is Donald Trump. It's the simple proposition that the enemy of my enemy is my friend. The more they attack him, the stronger he gets in the eyes of real America. This is a memo to everybody on the Republican side: the public is looking for someone to take on the press. Donald Trump has done it, and they're loving him for it. There's such an opportunity here, but you've got to have a bit of a backbone. Ted Cruz has shown he's got a great deal of backbone with the media. When he was attacked with the defund effort, his numbers got stronger and stronger.

**RUSH:** You endorsed Cruz in July, right?

**BOZELL:** I did.

**RUSH:** You've stuck with it?

**BOZELL:** I have. Not through the Media Research Center, or through my other organization, ForAmerica, but personally. Here's the way I evaluated it. There are a number of very good candidates out there. I said this was going to be the strongest bench that the Republican Party would field in many years, and I think that's true.

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**— BRENT BOZELL**

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But then when I look at all the good conservatives, there is only one for whom I have no questions. I can ask all the other ones what they meant by this vote, what they are going to do on this issue, what they meant by this statement they made, why they haven't spoken out on that issue, etc. With Ted Cruz, I have no questions. In the Fox debate, what I thought was really telling was that on any question, he not only had a specific policy moving forward, but he showed specifically how he's already been fighting for it. He was the only one who can do both.

**RUSH:** What was your analysis of the public reaction to that debate, aimed at Fox News? Not just Megyn Kelly, but the whole thing as it related to Trump?

**BOZELL:** People love Fox News. People have so much hope in Fox News, and I think people felt really let down by what they saw.

**RUSH:** Is that right?

**BOZELL:** Absolutely. I was there. I will tell you that the mood inside that auditorium was apparently very different from the mood on television. If you were to have taken a poll of the people who

were there, in no way did Donald Trump win that debate. You could hear the grumblings in the audience. People were asking why there were so few questions to Cruz, why there were so few questions to Carson, and then question after question after question to Trump. People got very tired of it, Rush.

The worst thing I thought was almost one-third of the time was taken up by these moderators talking. If Chris Wallace could just taken to ask a question in five seconds, we would all be in a much better place.

**RUSH:** I saw they got 33 minutes, more than the candidates got, combined, of airtime. But Brent, they got their audience, 24 million viewers. That's larger than anything on cable other than a special-event football game or some such.

**BOZELL:** I learned a lesson about this some years ago, during the O.J. trial, when CNN was nicknamed "The O.J. Network." I wrote a piece



criticizing CNN for not covering news any more. I got a call from Tom Johnson, the president of CNN, who pointed out that the year before the O.J. trial, CNN's audience had dropped 25 percent. When they started covering O.J. nonstop, their ratings went up by 400 percent. He asked me, "If you were in my shoes, and your job is to deliver advertising revenue, what would you do?" It's a tough question.

Roger Ailes loves controversy and is a master of this medium. It shouldn't surprise us that he has set yet another record, using the Trump phenomenon. But I think it's starting to flesh itself out. I looked at the new polls, and I think Trump may have peaked.

**RUSH:** To what do you attribute Trump's staying power? Most people, let's be honest, would have been gone, if they were the standard, ordinary, everyday politician. He grew. He expanded. I think there is so much anger among voters opposed to the Democrat Party and the Obama agenda, what it's been the past seven years. I think there is an explosive rage out there at the fact they haven't had any representation. They voted overwhelmingly, they've given the Republicans control of Congress, both Houses. Nothing to show for it. Trump comes along and just starts trashing everybody in conventional politics, and people are reacting. That's my assessment of what he's tapped into.

**BOZELL:** The question is, can he turn it into an army that goes to the polls and votes? I don't know. A lot of people thought Obama couldn't do that, and he did. It's a big question whether somebody who watched "The Apprentice" and thinks Donald Trump is cool but has never voted before is now going to vote.

**RUSH:** What do you make of Hillary and Bernie Sanders? Go back to 2008, it was hers, she was going to be coronated, it was a fait accompli, the primary process was perfunctory. All of a sudden,