Newsweek: A Dan Rather Rerun

The liberal media – whose political ideas rarely win at the ballot box and whose radical biases undermine their own credibility – continue to meltdown. And, as the MRC has repeatedly predicted and documented, the media are increasingly turning to character assassination – to destroy people and, in turn, destroy certain public policies.

This was obvious in the Dan Rather-forged memo scandal and it is obvious with the Koran-in-toilet “story” by Newsweek.

Just months after Dan Rather and CBS brought shame and disgrace to the entire American journalism profession with their phony National Guard expose of George W. Bush, Newsweek magazine has been exposed for declaring – with nothing more than one anonymous source’s gum-flapping – that U.S. interrogators were flushing the Koran down the toilet to inflame detainees at Guantanamo Bay.

How many eerie parallels are there between the CBS scandal and the Newsweek scandal? Let us count the ways:

1. Both stories caused liberal media types to hunt for years to prove the urban legends dear to the hearts of the Bush bashers. In the CBS case, reporters spent years pecking through George W. Bush’s National Guard records, searching desperately for, and occasionally suggest the existence of, smoking guns. They just knew he had somehow shirked his duties. In the Newsweek case, reporters had spent years chasing down the most shocking Guantanamo-interrogation stories they could find. Slate.com media critic Jack Shafer assembled a pile of poorly sourced Koran-in-the-toilet stories dating back to 1983, a regular urban legend of Islam coverage. The media just knew the U.S. military at Guantanamo were guilty of serious abuses.

2. Both stories relied on a single anonymous source. In CBS’s case, he was “unimpeachable”; in Newsweek’s, “reliable.” In the case of CBS, that source was revealed to be Bill Burkett, a Texas-based Bush-hater with a lot more poison than evidence against Bush. In Newsweek’s case, the magazine misled readers

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in their original story by saying “sources” claimed Koran-flushing would be in an official government report. Then they claimed it was simply a “senior government official.” Later, that “reliable” source couldn’t vouch for the accuracy of his own statement.

3. Both outlets made comical claims about their professionalism in a time of crisis. Dan Rather claimed he would be the first to report the story of his own incompetence, and also claimed, “those who have criticized aspects of our story have never criticized the heart of it.” Wrong. Newsweek called their reporting process “careful” and their laying out of the retracted story “transparent,” which is a strange word to use when the unreliable source is still anonymous.

4. Both stories were incorrectly declared to be “confirmed” by outside sources. CBS claimed it had multiple typography “experts” who had authenticated the National Guard memos; it was subsequently revealed they could not get an expert to authenticate the memos before they aired it, and then the lone “expert” they cited as an authenticator said he had not done any such thing. Newsweek claimed it had presented its story to a couple of top Pentagon brass, and had received no denial; it was subsequently revealed that neither had done so because it is impossible to prove a negative.

5. In both cases, the story, left unchallenged, would prove highly damaging to the Bush administration. If Bush had truly defied National Guard superiors in a grave manner, it could have sunk his re-election campaign. If U.S. military interrogators were really stupid enough to think it’s a neat idea to get information from Islamic radicals by flushing their sacred texts in the rest room, the White House would be confirmed as reckless zealots declaring war on every Islam-dominated nation. At this writing, the death toll caused by the Newsweek story stands at 17, with over 100 others injured in the ensuing riots. There is no telling how many more may die.

6. When both stories crumbled, the media outlets were initially reluctant to retract anything. Instead, they went about arrogantly maintaining it was up to their critics to prove them wrong, not their responsibility to get it right. For 12 days, Dan Rather stalled and stonewalled at CBS, declaring no one could prove his story false. Newsweek editor Mark Whitaker’s first line with the New York Times was that “We’re not retracting anything. We don’t know for certain what we got wrong.” Luckily for Newsweek, they saw the light on this faster than Rather did – but only, as with CBS, after an outpouring of public outrage.

7. But even after the official retraction, the spin control continued. Dan Rather continued to insist, and other reporters followed suit, that while the documents may have been fabricated, the National Guard story was true. Newsweek’s liberal media friends united around the theme that Newsweek will be proven right, that Koran-flushing was not “beyond the realm of possibility,” as CNN’s Anderson Cooper put it. On Nightline, NBC’s John Donvan intoned, “What really goes on at Guantanamo Bay, no one really knows.”

It’s just tragic that the liberal media are willing to believe the most exotic rumors about the depredations of President Bush and the U.S. military, long before they’ve been verified and long after they’ve been retracted.

This article is a reprint of L. Brent Bozell’s nationally syndicated column from May 18, 2005. For past Bozell columns visit www.MRC.org.
**A letter from L. Brent Bozell III**

**Dear Member,**

What a wonderful night it was!

It gets harder every year to outdo the last, but this year’s MRC Annual Gala and Media DisHonors Awards outdid them all. The caliber of the evening’s presentation and the grateful and sincere comments and applause of the guests attest to that.

On the night of April 21, more than 950 of the leading conservatives in America gathered at the JW Marriott hotel in Washington, D.C., to roast the most outrageously biased liberal reporting of 2004 and to present the MRC’s Conservative of the Year Award. It’s a time for the MRC to celebrate our achievements, meet face-to-face with some of our many supporters and, of course, poke a lot of good-natured fun at the liberal media.

No surprise, the liberal media gave us plenty to laugh about. There was Air America’s Janeane Garofalo declaring that George W. Bush was “unelectable” — on Jan. 20, 2005, two month’s after Bush’s re-election. There was the “old reliable” Walter Cronkite telling the world that he believed Bush adviser Karl Rove had actually orchestrated the Osama bin Laden videotape trashing President Bush during the presidential campaign. There was much, much more too. Believe me, we don’t make this stuff up. You can visit our Web site, www.mrc.org, and view the actual news clips.

This year we added a new twist to our gala: In 2004 we witnessed a group of men (and their families) who were determined to inform Americans about John Kerry’s real record in Vietnam—not the soldier-icon myth the media was crafting. These men, headed by John O’Neill, had fought in the Vietnam war; some of them, like O’Neill, right alongside Kerry. They were courageous. They are heroes. They weren’t political partisans bent on destroying an individual, as the major media painted them, after first ignoring them for six months, hoping they’d go away. No, the Swift Vets had one goal: to tell the truth. It sounds sentimental, but that’s the reason. As John O’Neill himself said at the gala: “So, why did we do it? How could we, in good conscience, permit the American public to unknowingly select someone as commander-in-chief, someone who didn’t know the difference between the good guys and the bad guys? It was as simple as that.”

Kerry, after all, had met with communist North Vietnamese officials to express support for their cause — during wartime! — and he had publicly denounced and lied about the actions of U.S. troops in Vietnam. His statements were valuable propaganda for Marxist butchers. To this day, Kerry’s photo is hanging in a museum in the “People’s Republic of Vietnam” as a hero — of the Viet Cong!

The major media didn’t want to talk about that. But the Swift Vets did, and Americans listened. For their courage and steadfastness, the MRC was proud to give the Swift Vets the Conservative of the Year Award.

There were five DisHonor Awards this year (for details, see pp. 4-5). The three award presenters included national radio talk show host Sean Hannity, who also co-hosts the FNC program, Hannity & Colmes; bestselling author and columnist Ann Coulter; and author and nationally syndicated talk radio host Neal Boortz. The event was emceed by Cal Thomas, the most widely syndicated columnist in America.

The award “winners,” of course, did not attend to accept their DisHonor. That’s why, as is our custom, we have some winner-surrogates step in and “accept” them. This year our “Acceptors” included Colin McNickle, editorial page editor of the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review; businessman and philanthropist T. Boone Pickens; talk radio host Janet Parshall; author Midge Decter; and Zell Miller, former Democratic senator of Georgia.

As always, the gala attracted national attention. Extensive coverage appeared in the Washington Times, the Hotline, the Fox News Channel, the American Spectator, Cal Thomas’ column (to nearly 600 newspapers), Editor & Publisher magazine, and in many other outlets.

It wouldn’t have happened without your support, and I never forget that. And, again, I thank you for it.

Until next time,

L. Brent Bozell III
President and Founder
Cal Thomas, nationally syndicated columnist and host of FNC’s *After Hours with Cal Thomas*, served as master of ceremonies. Award presenters included Sean Hannity, national radio talk show host and co-host of FNC’s *Hannity & Colmes*; bestselling author Ann Coulter; and nationally syndicated radio talk show host Neal Boortz.

**Award #1: REALLY Time to Retire Award**
(Presented by Sean Hannity)

**WINNER:** Former *CBS Evening News* anchor Walter Cronkite on CNN’s *Larry King Live*, October 29.

*Walter Cronkite:* “I have a feeling that it [bin Laden’s new videotape] could tilt the election a bit. In fact, I’m a little inclined to think that Karl Rove, the political manager at the White House, who is a very clever man, that he probably set up bin Laden to this thing.”

*Colin McNickle,* editorial page editor of the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, accepted the award and said: *“That Karl Rove, what a guy! What a Rolodex! Osama on speed dial!”*

**Award #2: Send Bush to Abu Ghraib Award**
(Presented by Sean Hannity)

**WINNER:** Bill Moyers, host of PBS’s *Now*, in an exchange with left-wing Sr. Joan Chittister, November 12.

*Bill Moyers:* “There have been 37,000 civilians killed in Iraq, or as many perhaps as 100,000. Why is abortion a higher moral issue with many American Christians than the invasion of Iraq and the loss of life there?”

*Sister Joan Chittister:* “Could I ask you that question? Because that is the moral question that brings me closest to tears. I do not understand that, Bill. You see, I’m absolutely certain that some of the people that we’re killing over there are pregnant women. Now what do you do? Now what do you do? That’s military abortion.”

*Moyers:* “Somebody said to me — that’s what?”

*Chittister:* “That’s military abortion. Why is that morally acceptable?”

*Moyers:* “Somebody said to me the other day that Americans don’t behead, but we do drop smart bombs that do it for us.”

*T. Boone Pickens,* a successful businessman and philanthropist, accepted the award and said of Bill Moyers, “the higher the monkey climbs the tree, the more people can see his ass. On behalf of Bill Moyers, I want to thank you for this well-deserved award.”
Award #3: Al Franken Award for the Stupidest Analysis
(Presented by Ann Coulter)
WINNER: CNN’s Bruce Morton on Inside Politics, January 30.

Bruce Morton: “Veterans haven’t been a big force in past campaigns... but the Vietnam vets may feel bound together more strongly...It may be too early to know how influential they’ll be in Kerry’s campaign, but they have already done one thing: If the Republicans had any hope of casting Kerry as some Michael Dukakis-style effete Eastern liberal, that’s over. The band of brothers stands in its way.”

Janet Parshall, host of the national talk radio show Janet Parshall’s America, accepted the award on behalf of Bruce Morton and commented: “Well, the Al Franken Award for the Stupidest Analysis — isn’t that a little redundant?”

Award #4: The I’m Not a Political Genius But I Play One on TV Award (Presented by Neal Boortz)
WINNER: Air America host Janeane Garofalo on MSNBC’s Scarborough Country, January 20, 2005, the night of Bush’s second inauguration.

Joe Scarborough: “Since George Bush got into public life, he’s been underestimated by his opponents... Is that a part of an act that this guy does to lull Democrats into underestimating him, or do Democrats just put up really, really bad candidates against this guy every four years?”

Comic/liberal radio host Janeane Garofalo: “Well, I don’t recognize that as a valid question. First of all, George W. Bush is a bad candidate. George W. Bush is unelectable, in my opinion. And secondly.”

Scarborough: “Well, why does he keep winning?”

Garofalo: “I don’t know, voter fraud? A failed mainstream media that fails to inform the electorate about what their government is doing? Ignorance? Apathy? I don’t know.”

Midge Decter, author and conservative commentator, accepted the award and said: “You know, I spoke to Janeane this morning, and she was thrilled. Awards don’t come to her thick and fast. ... She was in Rome. She had gone there to try to get those cardinals to try to start thinking outside the box. You know, maybe pick a non-Catholic or ....”

Award #5: John Kerry Suck-up Award
(Presented by Neal Boortz)
WINNER: CBS’s Byron Pitts during live coverage of John Kerry’s speech to the Democratic convention, July 29.

Byron Pitts: “It was four years ago during the Democratic convention, not far from where we stand tonight, that John Kerry stood near his father on his deathbed. Earlier, as the family was preparing to leave John Kerry’s home in Boston, I’m told he whispered to his sister, ‘Remember the words of our mother on her deathbed when she said, ‘John,’ knowing he would run for President some day, ‘remember, John, integrity, that’s what matters.’ Tonight, John Kerry tried to show that integrity.”

Zell Miller, former Democratic senator of Georgia, accepted the award and said: “I know why I came on this program: I believe in Brent Bozell and the Media Research Center, and all it does and all it stands for. ...”
…So, why did we get involved? …

It was very simple. How could we, in good conscience, permit the American public to unknowingly select someone as commander-in-chief, someone who didn’t know the difference between the good guys and the bad guys? It was as simple as that.

We knew that, in his real-life experience, John Kerry compared the North Vietnamese to George Washington. He said they were just Nationalists trying to bring a democratic government to Vietnam. He said that we were the army of Genghis Khan, and we were a monster created by the nation, that we were on a daily rampage of murder, of rape, and of mayhem.

There was a big difference between us and the people on the other side. But it was a difference between ourselves and our friends – many of whom were buried at Arlington – and people like Pol Pot and the NVA leaders, who butchered 4 million people when they took over. …

The story to me that says why we came is the story involving a man named Ron Bliss. … Ron Bliss was a graduate of the Air Force Academy. He was shot down in North Vietnam. He spent seven years in the Hanoi Hilton. Contrary to the stereotype of Vietnam veterans, he came back home, had a great family, and became a great lawyer for 28 years. But by the fall of this past year, Ron Bliss was dying of cancer. He died two months ago.

In October, we were filming the commercial of all those people, and Ron Bliss contacted Bill Frankie and said, ‘I’m dying. I’m not gonna’ be here very long. I want to spend as much time as possible with my wife and children. But I want to come because this is really, really important.’ …

The second thing I’d like to talk about is what we actually saw. We were heartsick at the mainstream media in the United States. They had less independence and curiosity than a pack of trained seals. … They had infinite curiosity over irrelevant details as, for example, Did Bush, 35 years ago, make three Reserve meetings? They even went to the point of using fictitious documents.

But all their curiosity suddenly disappeared when it came to the question of whether John Kerry met with the North Vietnamese in 1970 and 1971 when we were at war in Vietnam. It suddenly disappeared with respect to John Kerry’s own book, in 1971, The New Soldier; which even ridiculed the Marines at Iwo Jima. And it suddenly disappeared with respect to his false claims of atrocities, often made with servicemen who were themselves fakes – they had never even been in the armed services – that we were committing atrocities.

In general, any news hurting John Kerry was not fit to print for the mainline media. …

…Henry V at Agincourt, before the battle, heavily outnumbered by the French, gave a talk to his army. He talked about “we few, we happy few, we band of brothers.” He went on to win the battle. Kerry attempted to lift that and use it for his group. The truth is, if Henry V had ever met John Kerry, if he had ever indicated that the French were heroes and the English were war criminals, Henry V would have executed John Kerry. He would not have welcomed him as a brother.

…What we encountered was what Tennyson called “an equal temper of heroic minds,” people without whose courage nothing that we said would have ever been heard. We’d like to tell those people tonight that you have our thanks and an invitation. You are brave hearts of a kind that we sailed and fought with long ago. Someday, if in another 35 or 40 years, we go to the edge of the world in our little boats—as Tennyson said, out beyond all the Western stars—we’d be very proud to have you come. You’re our kind of people. I know Ron Bliss and a lot of our friends we haven’t seen in a long time will be there. They’d be very proud of you too. Thank you. Goodbye.

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MRC’s Conservative of the Year Award

John O’Neill and the Swift Vets and POWs for Truth

Excerpted from John O’Neill’s acceptance speech for the Conservative of the Year Award, April 21, 2005.

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John O’Neill praises the support of conservatives and his fellow Vietnam veterans during his acceptance speech of the Conservative of the Year Award for the Swift Vets and POWs for Truth.
MRC IN THE NEWS
The experts at the Media Research Center are interviewed almost every day on stories of national importance, often reaching millions of Americans daily. They provide analysis and commentary on radio, TV, the Internet, in magazines, books and in newspapers, always striving to help restore political balance to the major media. Some of the MRC’s latest media appearances include the following:

Television
- FNC: Hannity & Colmes – May 16
- MSNBC: Scarborough Country – April 20, May 2, May 16
- FNC: Fox News Watch – May 14
- FNC: Special Report with Brit Hume – May 10

Radio
Rush Limbaugh Show, May 18
The Right Balance, May 19
Sean Hannity Tuned Into America, May 16
Battleline with Alan Nathan, May 16
WBAL, Baltimore, May 16
American Family Radio, May 16
Family News in Focus, May 16
Janet Parshall’s America, May 4, 19
WDAY, Fargo, May 18
KERN, Bakersfield, Calif., May 16
WCHS, Charleston, WVa., May 4
Jerry Doyle Show, May 4
KMED, Medford, Ore., May 2, 3
KDKA, Pittsburgh, Penn., May 2
WFLA, Orlando, May 2
WSBA, York, Penn., May 2
KTEM, Temple, Tex., May 2
WACV, Montgomery, May 2
WHO, Des Moines, May 2
WAAM, Ann Arbor, April 30
NRA News, April 29
KOOG, May 4, 11, 18
WBAP, May 6, 13, 20

Print
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Boston Globe, May 17
Dallas Morning News, May 13
Houston Chronicle, May 13
Washington Post, May 13
New York Post, May 9
Investor’s Business Daily, May 5, 13, 17
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Scripps Howard News Service, April 28

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American Spectator, April 28
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Washington Times, April 25, 28, 29, May 11, 13, 19
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Conservative Voice, May 2
Media Matters, April 27, May 17
MichNews.com, May 16
LifeNews.com, May 16
AlterNet, May 16
RushLimbaugh.com, April 26
World Net Daily, April 26
TAEmag.com, May 2
American Thinker.com, April 30
NewsHounds, April 29
NewsMax.com, April 29
Concerned Women for America.org, May 5

On Scarborough Country, MRC President Brent Bozell explains why Newsweek’s bogus story on mistreatment of the Koran is further evidence of the liberal media meltdown.

FMP National Chairman Herman Cain details how the left-wing media distort the facts about Social Security reform on Your World with Neil Cavuto.

MRC President Brent Bozell discusses the DisHonors Awards on Hannity & Colmes.
ABOUT YOUR ESTATE

Who is the beneficiary of your estate?
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Without a will and proper planning, the government could be the primary beneficiary of your estate.

To stop this from happening, make sure you have a will that distributes your assets in accordance with your principles and beliefs.

Including the Media Research Center in your estate plans guarantees that America’s Media Watchdog will continue to document, expose, and neutralize the liberal media for years to come - a fine legacy indeed!

If you have already included us in your will or living trust, please let us know so that we may properly thank you.

For more information, please call Thom Golab at (800) 672-1423 or visit us online at www.mrc.gift-planning.org.

Sample bequest language (to be reviewed by your attorney):

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