

FLASH NEWS

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The Media Research Center's Monthly Members' Report

Dan Rather and CBS in Meltdown

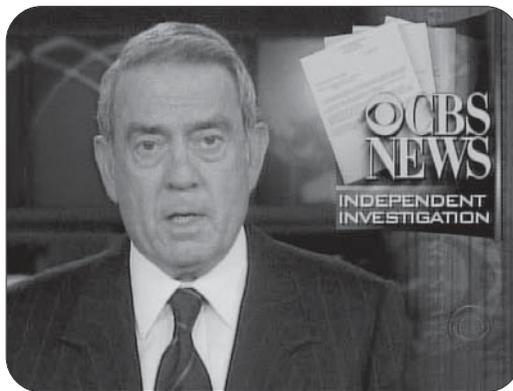
Dear Member,

Poor Dan Rather. His entrenched liberal bias is doing him and CBS in. They are melting down, in terms of credibility, audience share, and plain-old common sense and professionalism. And we at the MRC are –if we may blow our horn a little – pleased to say that, thanks to your support, we have helped bring the truth about CBS and Rather into the light.

CBS could come out of this mess a better and more balanced network. Time will tell. Yet given the way it has reacted to the fallout, we don't recommend anyone hold his breath.

It's important to review exactly what Dan Rather and CBS did. On September 8, *60 Minutes* ran with a story about George Bush's National Guard service that was designed to undermine Bush's credibility and leadership just seven weeks before Election Day.

Rather and CBS claimed they had "exclusive information" and "government documents" showing that Bush had ignored a direct order and that his Guard commander was being pressured to "sugar coat" Bush's record. A hot story, to be sure, if true. But it wasn't. And the MRC and our news division, CNSNews.com, broke the fraud first.



Dan Rather and CBS's *60 Minutes* used forged documents to try to smear President Bush just seven weeks before Election Day.

The morning after the *60 Minutes* report aired, CNSNews.com was smelling a rat; by noon, we had three typography experts on the record declaring the documents were forgeries. CNSNews.com posted the bombshell expose at 2:00 p.m. and instantly it was "Breaking News" on the *Drudge*

Report, and the rest is history. Within days, most of the major media had not only independently confirmed that the documents used by CBS were forgeries but also that CBS had engaged in other scandalous and dishonest actions.

For instance, CBS claimed that a Gen. Bobby Hodges had vouched for the documents allegedly written by Col. Jerry Killian. But, as the *Los Angeles Times* reported, it turns out that CBS only read *portions* of the memos to Hodges over the phone. *CBS never showed him the actual documents.* When he finally saw the memos—after the show aired—Hodges said they were forgeries. CBS also claimed that document expert Marcel Matley had vouched for the authenticity of the memos. Yet, when pressed, Matley said, "There's no way that I, as a document expert, can authenticate them"—he had only seen photocopies, not the originals.

It gets worse. The *Dallas Morning News* confirmed that the senior officer who

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Weapons of Mass Distortion: The Coming Meltdown of the Liberal Media



America's Media Watchdog

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supposedly pressured Bush's immediate commander to "sugar coat" his record had, in fact, retired 18 months before he was said to have applied such pressure. Then, Sean Hannity interviewed Killian's widow, who told him that her husband didn't type and that he didn't keep secret files. Also, Killian's son, himself a Guard officer, told CBS that no Guard officer in his "right mind" would write such a memo. *CBS chose not to include him in the story.* The son then recommended that CBS talk to Lt. Bush's roommate. The CBS producer dismissed this witness as "a Bush supporter."

The final nail in the coffin came when ABC interviewed two of the document experts hired by CBS and who CBS claimed had authenticated the documents. ABC learned otherwise. The experts had warned CBS just days before the offending segment aired that they found "red flags" in the documents, and they urged CBS not to use them. The "honest mistake" defense was dead.

CBS was outed, once again, as complicit in this ugly plot.

The story was a fraud, and everyone knew it. Yet CBS, still blinded by its liberal bias, spent the next 10 days denying the obvious. Even when forced to admit the piece was wrong, CBS waffled. Dan Rather, for instance, said he could no longer vouch for the documents "journalistically" but he believed what they said. In other words, the memos are fakes but what they say is true. Journalism schools don't teach that it's okay to fake a document to smoke out a larger "truth," Dan Rather and CBS apparently do. (For the record, Rather, to this day, still claims that he believes the documents are real, not forgeries.)

Despite the exposure of the *60 Minutes* story as fraudulent, many elite media figures came to the defense of CBS and Rather. He "can't really be blamed for" the hoax, said Tom Shales, television critic for the *Washington Post*. "[H]e was assured by others that the memos were real." And Rather is "a team player, and he wanted to support the team." CBS's Andy Rooney and Keith Olbermann of MSNBC both suggested that the scandal was a Republican plot—that GOP operatives had apparently forged the memos and passed them to CBS as a way to discredit the network and Rather.

Tom Brokaw said of Rather: "This is not something I am persuaded that he's out to do deliberately despite what some bloggers will say or radio talk show hosts will say. ... I think he was really trying to get at a big story about the president's

National Guard service. And they got stung by some documents."

Then, at a *New Yorker* forum featuring Brokaw, Rather, and ABC's Peter Jennings, Brokaw suggested the real problem wasn't CBS but the Internet. "What I think is highly inappropriate is what's going on across the Internet, a kind of political jihad against Dan Rather and CBS News that is quite outrageous."

Jennings praised Rather at the forum and said, well, you can't "judge a man by only one event in his career."

Amazing. CBS dupes every single major media outlet with a false report. Stung by this fraud, many of these outlets, like ABC News, the *Washington Post*, and others take it upon themselves to expose the fraud. And then their own reporters circle the wagons and defend Rather!

Brokaw, clearly incensed by the power of the alternative media, lashed out at the MRC and yours truly, for the third time this year. At the forum, Brokaw rued how "Brent Bozell has, you know, an entire organization

devoted to doing as much damage, and I choose that word carefully, as he can to the credibility of the news divisions."

Finally, on October 6, the top media circled all the wagons: At an awards dinner sponsored by the Radio-Television News Directors Association and Foundation, Dan Rather, in front of some 500 media luminaries, accepted the Overall Excellence Award for CBS.

Meanwhile, the independent inquiry of the *60 Minutes* story, overseen by former Attorney General Dick Thornburgh and former Associated Press executive Louis Boccardi, plans to release its findings after the election. After all, if there is a hint that the documents may have come from the Kerry camp, it would likely kill Kerry's campaign and ensure Bush's victory – and the major media want Bush to lose, as Rather, CBS, and their liberal colleagues have shown.

They are politically biased to the core. Balance and fair play don't matter to them. And that's why we do what we do. And when we catch them in the act, Mr. Brokaw, it's not "damage." It's justice. Get used to it!

Until next month,

L. Brent Bozell III
Founder and President



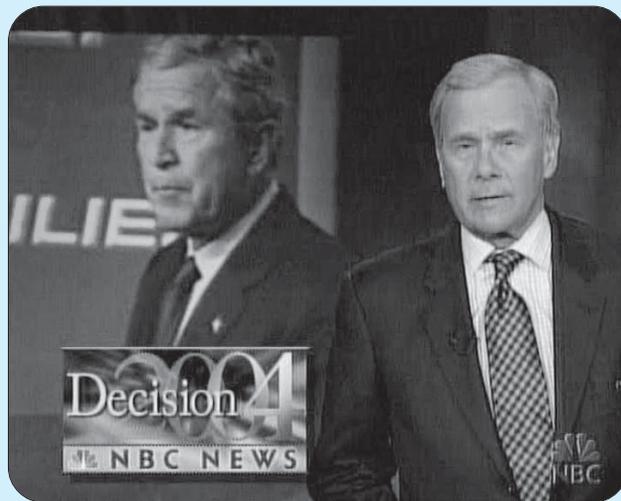
Although CBS and Dan Rather duped the major media and then got caught, NBC's Tom Brokaw and ABC's Peter Jennings, among others, defended Rather.

					<p>To order any of these items, simply call 1-800-672-1423 or visit the MRC's bookstore at www.MRC.org</p>

MRC Catches NBC Putting "I LIE" in Bush's Mouth

NBC *Nightly News* ran a presidential election story on October 4 with a graphic of President Bush's face in front of the word "FAMILIES," but at an angle such that the word "ILIE" was directly in front of Bush's mouth for a full 16 seconds. Coincidence? Don't believe it. But thanks to the watchful eyes of the MRC's News Analysis Division, which caught the stunt, the story was picked up by the *Drudge Report*, Rush Limbaugh, and was posted on Limbaugh's Web site. With this story, the MRC broke last year's record of 146,000 daily visitors to its Web site — this time, more than 176,000 people logged onto the MRC to read the "ILIE" *CyberAlert*.

NBC dismissed the "ILIE" broadcast as "just plain silly." This was the same network that went ballistic four years ago over an anti-Gore ad, distributed by the Bush campaign. In that ad, the word "RATS" is seen for a single frame — not the 16 seconds of "ILIE" — in a scene where Gore is talking in front of a sign that reads "BUREAUCRATS." NBC viewed the ad as an attempt to smear big government and Al Gore. It ran two full stories on "RATS." On September 12, 2000, NBC's Claire Shipman showed the ad and allowed Gore to maintain: "I find it a very disappointing development. I've never seen anything quite like it." And, added Shipman: "A marketing expert on the effects of so-called subliminal advertising says in his experience, this sort of word flash is not accidental and it can be effective." But when NBC gets caught, well, it's "just plain silly."



Brokaw Scolds the MRC, Bozell

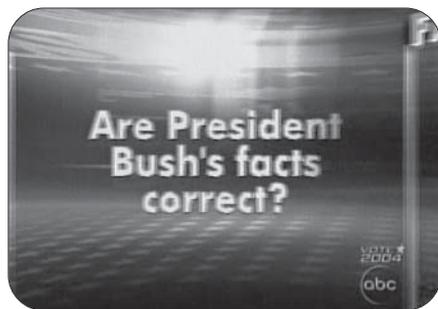
NBC News anchor Tom Brokaw just can't seem to get the Media Research Center and its president out of his head. In a forum with Dan Rather and Peter Jennings sponsored by the *New Yorker* magazine on October 2, Brokaw complained: "But what has happened now, because of the tools that are available, both across the political spectrum from left to right, is that they [skeptics] can in fact enlist constituencies in a way that, I mean Brent Bozell has, you know, an entire organization devoted to doing as much damage, and I choose that word carefully, as he can, to the credibility of the news divisions."

On the Sunday before the Democratic National Convention, at a forum on media coverage of the presidential campaign, Brokaw said: "There are organized interest groups out there. There's a guy by the name of Brent Bozell, who makes a living at, you know, taking us on every night. He's well-organized, he's got a constituency, he's got a newsletter. He can hit a button and we'll hear from him." And, back in January, in an interview for the *Columbia Journalism Review*, Brokaw called the complaints of a liberal bias "a little wearying" and charged that "most of the cases are pretty flimsily made. ... What I get tired of is Brent Bozell trying to make these fine legal points everywhere every day. A lot of it just doesn't hold up. So much of it is that bias — like beauty — is in the eye of the beholder."

ABC to 'Correct' Bush's Errors

Executives at ABC say that President Bush is exaggerating the truth, if not lying, about certain things and that the job of the media is to correct those fibs and hold Bush accountable—more than for John Kerry, who apparently lies less often than Bush, according to the media giant.

ABC News Political Director Mark Halperin sent a memo to staffers on October 8, which said, "The current Bush attacks on Kerry involve



ABC News "corrects" Bush's facts more often than it corrects Kerry's facts.

distortions and taking things out of context in a way that goes beyond what Kerry has done. ...We have a responsibility to hold both sides accountable to the public interest, but that doesn't mean we reflexively and artificially hold both sides 'equally' accountable when the facts don't warrant that." That night, ABC's debate coverage "corrected" two of Bush's alleged errors and one of Kerry's. For ABC, apparently only one side makes the most political exaggerations on the campaign trail.

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Abe 'Kerry' Lincoln vs. 'King' George Bush

John Kerry's flip-flopping on issues makes him like...Abraham Lincoln, according to *Newsweek* Managing Editor Jon Meacham. Kerry "also could make a virtue, it seems to me, of the so-called flip-flopping," said Meacham on MSNBC during the Sept. 30 presidential debate. "The greatest flip-flop in American history is Lincoln, [who] in his first Inaugural was not for emancipation and then two years later he was. Is that statesmanship or is that a flip-flop?"

After the debate, Meacham, still on MSNBC, compared George Bush to a self-absorbed king. "Bush kept saying, 'I know how this world works, I know how to deal with these guys,'" noted Meacham. "This was a man who was almost monarchical in his tone and he, you know, we talked before about he became Henry V and this was, and this was a kind, there was an element of self-pity there."



John Kerry's flip-flopping on issues makes him presidential, like Abraham Lincoln, says *Newsweek's* Jon Meacham.

CBS's Dodgy Draft Story

On September 28, Dan Rather's *CBS Evening News* tried to legitimize bogus Internet claims that Bush would impose a military draft if re-elected. Reporter Richard Schlesinger profiled a mother, Beverly Cocco, who "is petrified about a military draft, and she's not alone. Mass e-mails are circulating among worried parents." Schlesinger asked Cocco, who he claimed was a



CBS stirred fears of a military draft based on long-discredited Internet rumors.

Republican, "Would you vote for a Democrat?" And she said: "Absolutely. I would vote for Howdy Doody if I thought it would keep my boys home and safe."

Schlesinger never told CBS's viewers that his "petrified" mother is a leading activist with "People Against the Draft," although he briefly showed the anti-war group's Web site on-screen. CBS also never disclosed that the Pentagon opposes a draft and the only legislation for a draft was submitted by anti-war Democrats and has little congressional support. But CBS producer Linda Karas told the blog site INDCJournal.org that the falsity of the Internet claims was beside the point: "The truth of the e-mails were absolutely irrelevant to the piece, because all the story said was that people were worried." The truth ... or in this case, the falsity ... of a "news" story is now "absolutely irrelevant"?

Washington Post 'All Wrong' on WMD Headline

On October 7, the day after the report by the CIA's chief weapons inspector on Iraq came out, the *Washington Post* ran a front-page headline that read: "U.S. 'Almost All Wrong' on Weapons." The *Post* also ran the quote in its front-page story on the issue, attributing the words to CIA inspector Charles Duelfer. The problem is that Duelfer never said "almost all wrong," either in his report or in his congressional testimony. It was former weapons inspector David Kay who had

said “almost all wrong,” way back in January of this year.

The *Post* finally got around to somewhat correcting itself, inside the paper, on October 8. And then on Sunday, October 10, Ombudsman David Getler noted that the Friday “correction” didn’t explain how the error “happened, as is customary.” He then carried on with more non-clarity by explaining the reason for the error as following: “There is no room here to do so but it boils down to a transcription mistake, by a normally excellent and careful reporter, that wasn’t caught.”

NBC’s Katie Couric Praises Carter, Again

While even liberal historians (not to mention the American public) rank Jimmy Carter very low on the presidential greatness totem, NBC’s Katie Couric can’t help fawning over the ex-president. In a two-part interview (September 30 and October 1)—in large measure to criticize President Bush, as Couric’s questions showed—the *Today Show* host got Carter to explain why the Iraq war was wrong, how John Kerry could overcome his flip-flopper image, and to talk about how presidential campaigns

today are “increasingly partisan and vitriolic.”

Carter claimed that things were more civil when he ran for president. Yet he neglected to mention, as did Couric, that he had once suggested that President



NBC’s Katie Couric fawns as Jimmy Carter explains that Bush’s policies are endangering “our nation’s soul.”

Ford had been “brainwashed” about Poland. As for Ronald Reagan, Carter called him “President Vicious.” And as for President Bush, he is endangering “our nation’s soul,” Carter told Couric, who found nothing negative in that.

Double Standard at the *New York Times*

The *New York Times*, like most elite media, ignored the Swift Boat Veterans

for Truth campaign until after Sen. John Kerry criticized the group publicly. While then compelled to report on the group and its statements about Kerry’s Vietnam war service, the *Times* repeatedly called the veterans’ claims “unsubstantiated” no less than 20 times in various stories – this, despite documents, photographs, and testimony from numerous Swift Boat veterans.

Yet when Terri McAuliffe, chairman of the Democratic National Committee, accused (with no proof) President Bush of being “AWOL” during part of his National Guard service in Texas, the *New York Times* did not label that claim “unsubstantiated.” Its reporters instead repeated the claim in many stories, citing McAuliffe or other Democratic leaders, without any labels such as unsubstantiated or alleged. That’s a clear double standard and apparently the only standard fit to print in the *Times*, explained Clay Waters, director of *TimesWatch*, an MRC-sponsored project.

See Waters’ special report, *Double Standard: Times Tars Swift Boat Vets, Plugs False ‘Bush AWOL’ Story* (<http://www.timeswatch.org/reports/04/report0904.asp>).

MINIBITS

☞ “Honest reporters” know that CBS and Dan Rather made a mistake with the forged documents story and say, “there but for the grace of God go I,”

according to CNN’s Aaron Brown. Some partisans “will see willful deception on the part of CBS,” but “[s]marter and more reasoned heads know better.” ☞ NBC’s Tom Brokaw, at a *New Yorker* forum, comes to the defense of CBS’s Dan Rather by saying, “What I think is highly inappropriate is what’s going on across the Internet, a kind of political jihad against Dan Rather and CBS News” ☞ “These three aging white men are stuck somewhere in the middle trying, on a nightly basis, to give a fair and balanced picture of what’s going on in the world,” said NBC’s Tom Brokaw, flanked by ABC’s Peter Jennings and CBS’s Dan Rather at the same *New Yorker* forum. ☞ Following critical reports that his National Guard story on George Bush was based on forged documents, Dan Rather stuck to his guns: “The story is true. The story is true....

I appreciate the sources who took risks to authenticate our story. So, one, there is no internal investigation. Two, somebody may be shell-shocked, but it is not I, and it is not anybody at CBS News. Now, you can tell who is shell-shocked by the ferocity of the people who are spreading these rumors.” ... More Rather: “I don’t back down. I don’t cave when the pressure gets too great from these partisan political ideological forces.” ☞ When asked by Bill O’Reilly whether he would put Dan Rather on TV on election night, Don Hewitt, the creator of *60 Minutes*, said: “Boy, that’s an agonizing—I’m glad I don’t have to make that decision.”



“Smarter” people know Dan Rather just made an honest mistake with the forged memo story, says CNN’s Aaron Brown.

Members of Congress Thank the MRC for a Job Well Done

As *FLASH* reported to you last month, it was the combined and quick work of the MRC, particularly CNSNews.com Managing Editor David Thibault, CNS reporter Robert Bluey, and Free Market Project Director Dan Gainor that broke the story on CBS and Dan Rather's use of forged documents to smear President Bush's service record in the National Guard. That great investigative work, made possible by MRC supporters, sparked a storm of media coverage and investigative work that has rocked CBS and the liberal media elite and made many Americans aware of media bias. In gratitude, 39 members of Congress signed a letter thanking the MRC for a job well done.

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 22, 2004

Mr. L. Brent Bozell III
Mr. Dan Gainor
Media Research Center
325 S. Patrick St.
Alexandria, VA 22314

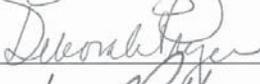
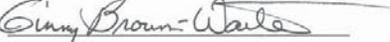
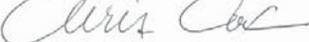
Dear Brent, Dan, and the MRC team,

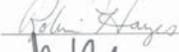
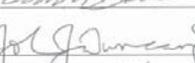
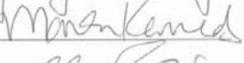
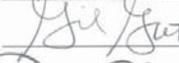
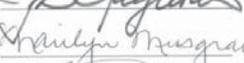
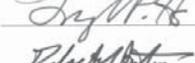
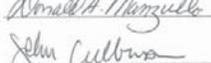
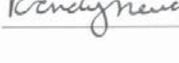
Congratulations and thank you on a job well done! Your ground breaking discovery of the forged National Guard documents - aired on CBS - displayed your diligence and attentiveness in combating media bias. Your work is greatly appreciated.

It is discoveries like this that will pave the way for other media inaccuracies to be brought into public view. Fortunately for all of us, you had the will and the know-how to make this happen.

Thank you and keep up the good work!

Sincerely,



AMERICA'S MEDIA WATCHDOG

Documenting, Exposing and Fighting Media Bias

MRC IN THE NEWS

The experts at the Media Research Center are interviewed almost every day on stories of national importance. As Election Day 2004 comes and goes, MRC spokesmen are hitting radio, TV, the Internet, magazines, and the newspapers, pushing hard for a fairer and more balanced media. This is vitally crucial given the presidential election, a race that most in the media want to go one way, and at a time when liberal bias, such as Dan Rather's use of forged documents, is being exposed for all Americans to see. The MRC is effective, as the coverage below shows.



Television

- ABC 7's *Capital Sunday*, October 17
- FNC *The O'Reilly Factor*, October 12
- CNN *Headline News*, October 11
- CNBC *Capitol Report*, October 11
- CNN *Live From*, October 11
- CNBC *Capitol Report*, October 4
- CNBC *News*, October 4
- CBS *Market Watch*, September 24
- Big Story with John Gibson*, FOX, Sept. 21
- CBN, September 17, 20

Radio

- Rush Limbaugh Show, October 5
- WOR – New York City, September 23

Appearances by MRC Research Director Rich Noyes

- Voice of America, October 13
- WBAL – Baltimore, October 12
- WAIC – Springfield, October 6
- KDKA – Pittsburgh, October 5
- WABC – October 3
- WIBC – Indianapolis, Sept. 23, 30, Oct. 7
- KTTH – Seattle, September 23
- WKY – Oklahoma City, September 21-22
- WDUN – Gainesville, September 22
- WABC – New York City, September 21
- Metro News Radio Network, September 21
- SRN News, September 21
- WFLA – Tampa, September 17
- WTKS – Savannah, September 16
- WTN – Nashville, September 16
- American Family Radio, September 15
- WLW – Cincinnati, September 15
- KTSA – San Antonio, September 14

Appearances by MRC Director of Media Analysis Tim Graham

- NRA News – September 21, October 6
- Linda Chavez Show, October 6
- Newsbeat, October 5
- WRVA – Richmond, September 23
- WNTA – Rockford, September 22
- American Journal Radio, September 21
- WBAL – Baltimore, September 18
- WAAM – Ann Arbor, September 18
- KCOL – Fort Collins, September 17
- WOND – Atlantic City, September 17
- KOGO – San Diego, September 22, 29, October 5, 12
- WGST – Atlanta, September 21, 28, October 4, 11

Print

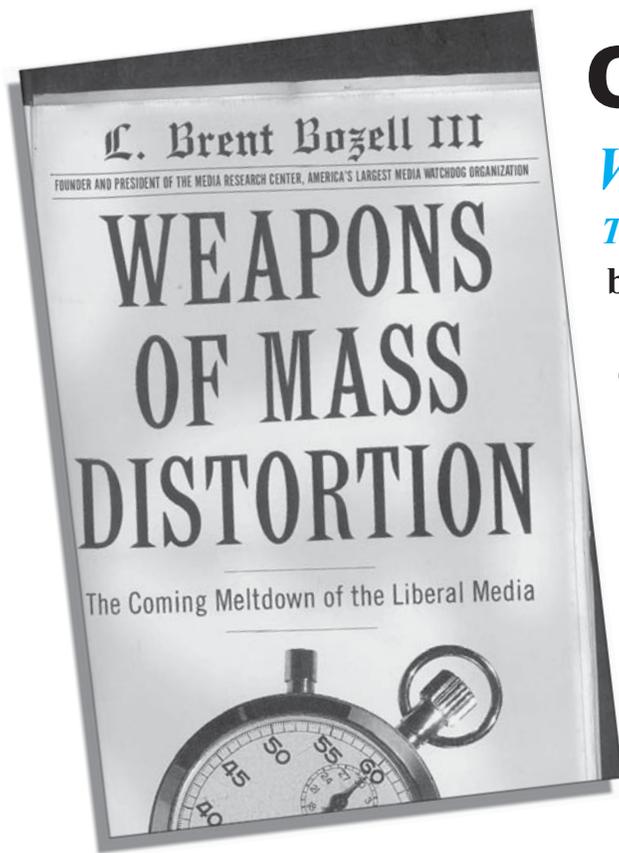
- The Limbaugh Letter*, October 14
- Investor's Business Daily*, September 24, 30, October 12
- Chattanooga Times Free Press*, October 10
- Agape Press, October 6
- Copley News Service, October 4
- Human Events*, October 4
- San Diego Union-Tribune*, October 4
- Weekly Standard*, October 4
- Washington Post*, October 2, 7
- Reason* magazine, October 1
- Augusta Free Press*, September 30
- San Jose Mercury News*, September 29
- Union Leader*, September 29
- Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, September 28
- The Detroit News*, September 26
- USA Today*, September 27

- Financial Times*, September 24
- Cox News Service, September 23
- Boston Globe*, September 22
- Newsday*, September 21, 22
- Hartford Courant*, September 21
- The Hotline*, September 21
- Boston Herald*, September 21
- Washington Times*, September 20, 21, October 4, 9, 11, 21
- Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, September 19, October 4, 11
- Baltimore Sun*, September 17, October 6
- Associated Press State & Local Wire, September 17
- National Journal*, September 17

Internet

- MichNews.com, October 11
- Human Events Online, October 6
- FrontPagemag.com, October 6
- Drudge Report.com, October 5
- Rush Limbaugh.com, October 5
- FAIR, October 2004
- LifeNews.com, September 27
- TAEmag.com (The American Enterprise), September 27
- NewsMax.com, September 23, October 3
- National Review Online, September 22, 24, October 1, 6, 9
- Associated Press Online, September 19

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ON SALE NOW!

Weapons of Mass Distortion

The Coming Meltdown of the Liberal Media

by L. Brent Bozell III

The leading expert on media bias makes the most substantive case yet for the leftward bias of America's mainstream news organizations, and reveals why the days of the liberal media's dominance are numbered.

As Founder and President of the Media Research Center, L. Brent Bozell III is a leading expert on the issue of media bias. In *Weapons of Mass Distortion*, he presents the definitive account of the current prevalence and future vulnerability of the liberal media.

With a wealth of facts and evidence at his command, Bozell reveals exactly how the major TV, radio, and print news outlets not only distort the news but try to dictate the national agenda as well. Bozell also explains why the liberal media's audience will continue to defect to the emerging alternative news outlets – outlets more in tune with their perspective on the world – and how this defection will change the slant of mainstream news.

“L. Brent Bozell III is, as has been frequently noted, a national treasure; the work his Media Research Center does in compiling evidence of the media's flagrant bias is invaluable. Bozell's new book, *Weapons of Mass Distortion: The Coming Meltdown of the Liberal Media*, provides example after hilarious example of the press allowing its biases to obscure the truth.” — *National Review*

Published by CrownForum, a member of the Crown Publishing Group. To purchase the book visit www.MRC.org



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