

Notable Quotables

December 17, 2007 (Vol. Twenty; 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 2007 The Twentieth 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 2007 (December 2006 through November 2007). To determine this year's winners, a panel of 53 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 2007. 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, Kristine Lawrence and Melissa Lopez 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 Eric Pairel posted the entire package on the MRC's Web site: www.mrc.org.

And please save this date: Thursday, April 10, 2008. At the Media Research Center's annual gala celebration that night in Washington, DC, the MRC will announce the winners of the *DisHonors Awards of 2008: Roasting the Most Outrageously Biased Liberal Reporters*. Check www.mrc.org in early 2008 for additional information.

Dynamic Duo Award for Idolizing Bill and Hillary

✓ "When I watched him [former President Bill Clinton] at Mrs. King's funeral, I just have never seen anything like it.... There are times when he sounds like Jesus in the temple. I mean, amazing ability to transcend ethnicity — race, we call it, it's really ethnicity — in this country and, and speak to us all in this amazingly primordial way."

— Chris Matthews, MSNBC's *Hardball*, Feb. 28. [93 points]

Runners-up:

■ "Nobody can bask in applause with quite so much style — the gentle wave, the grin the shape of a sideways comma, the sense that he knows he deserves the accolades and yet is humbled by all the clapping, which makes people clap harder.... He still has this way of presenting his ideas for reforms as simple, elegant solutions.... Listening to the man think out loud again, it was hard not to pine for an era before bad news got really bad, before Sept. 11 showed up on the calendar every year as Patriot Day."

— *Washington Post* staff writer David Segal on the launch of Bill Clinton's latest book, Sept. 5 Style section. [58]

■ "It's her resilience and capacity to survive and thrive against all comers that partly fuels the haters' fury.... Installed in Washington, Hillary morphed into a comic-book villain for her detractors — a man-eating feminist, they claimed, who allegedly threw lamps at her husband, communed psychi-

cally with Eleanor Roosevelt and lit a White House Christmas tree adorned with sex toys. The narrative of depravity — a tissue of inventions by conservatives — was often hard to follow.... The anti-Hillary industry has never managed to bring down Hillary herself — in fact, the more they have attacked, the higher she has risen."

— *Newsweek's* Jonathan Darman and Mark Hosenball in "The New War on Hillary," June 18 issue. [42]

■ "There was this great story in *The Atlantic* this month about your philanthropy, the CGI [Clinton Global Initiative] and your other activities at the foundation. And the author says you're basically re-inventing philanthropy, or trying to re-invent philanthropy.... He writes that, 'as a result of this, history may remember Bill Clinton as the philanthropist who happened to be President.' You okay with that?"

— ABC's George Stephanopoulos to his former boss, ex-President Bill Clinton, on *This Week*, September 30. [36]

■ "I want to get to 'Hillary '08,' but I want to start with *It Takes a Village* '07. Because this book came out ten years ago and a lot has happened in the past ten years that makes it, I think, even more imperative, that we will need a village to raise healthy, secure children. We've had the war in Iraq, 9/11, the impact of the Internet. What is the most important thing we can do, as a nation, to guarantee that our children are safe and secure?"

— Meredith Vieira's first question to Senator Hillary Clinton on NBC's *Today*, December 18, 2006. [32]

For video and audio clips of the broadcast quotes in this issue, go to: www.MRC.org

America Makes Us Sick Award

✓ “Through every Abu Ghraib and Haditha, through every rape and murder, the American public has indulged those in uniform....We pay the soldiers a decent wage, take care of their families, provide them with housing and medical care and vast social support systems and ship obscene amenities into the war zone for them, we support them in every possible way, and their attitude is that we should in addition roll over and play dead, defer to the military and the generals and let them fight their war, and give up our rights and responsibilities to speak up because they are above society?...[T]he recent NBC report is just an ugly reminder of the price we pay for a mercenary — oops sorry, volunteer — force that thinks it is doing the dirty work.”

— **WashingtonPost.com military columnist William Arkin in a January 30 column reacting to a report by NBC reporter Richard Engel. Arkin later apologized for using the word “mercenary.” [107 points]**

Runners-up:

■ “I think a draft produces a better Army than the one we would have with all volunteers, because I think you get average Americans if you have a draft. And if it’s an all-volunteer Army, you get people who join up because of some problem in their own lives. They don’t have anything else to do, they don’t have a job, or they can’t find what they want to do, so they join the Army. And it doesn’t produce the best Army.”

— **CBS’s Andy Rooney on MSNBC’s *Imus in the Morning*, March 14. [71]**

■ “Governor Romney, Daniel Duchovnik [ph] from Walnut Creek, California wants to know, ‘What do you dislike most about America?’”

— **Online question selected by *The Politico*’s Jim VandeHei to pose to the Republican presidential candidates at their May 3 MSNBC debate. [55]**

■ “There is something tragic about Edwards’s failure to break through. Today, 37 million Americans live below the poverty line, 12 million more than at the time of [Sen. Robert F.] Kennedy’s death. And yet Edwards’s call of conscience has not resonated. By all rights, Edwards, the son of a millworker, should have an easier time talking about poverty than did Kennedy, the son of a millionaire. His difficulty speaks to the candidate’s inability to connect. It also speaks to the nation’s inability to be moved.”

— ***Newsweek*’s Jonathan Darman reporting on Democratic candidate John Edwards’s anti-poverty push, July 30 issue. [55]**

Damn Those Conservatives Award

✓ “I’m just saying if he did die, other people, more people would live. That’s a fact.”

— **Host Bill Maher on his HBO show *Real Time*, March 2, discussing how a few commenters at a left-wing blog were upset that an attempt to kill Vice President Cheney in Afghanistan had failed. [91 points]**

Runners-up:

■ “When doctors pronounced the Rev. Jerry Laymon Falwell Sr. dead at 12:40 p.m. EST Tuesday....my first thoughts were not of what to say or write. In fact, my very first thought upon hearing of the Rev. Falwell’s passing was: Good. And I didn’t mean ‘good’ in a oh-good-he’s-gone-home-to-be-with-the-Lord kind of way. I meant ‘good’ as in ‘Ding-dong, the witch is dead.’”

— ***Chicago Sun-Times* columnist Cathleen Falsani in her May 18 piece, “Sigh of relief over Falwell death.” [61]**

■ “This is going to result in racial profiling. If, in her America, in Michelle’s America, when you look, ‘Is that Hispanic guy an illegal or is he legal?’ It reminds me so much of when they used to pull down the pants of Jews to see if they were circumcised or not. It is, it is so, so pathetic. It’s so un-American....I want you to know, ladies and gentlemen, that what they are doing is using the police force of the United States to break up families and sow horror and pain.”

— **Geraldo Rivera rejecting columnist Michelle Malkin’s argument that citizens should report illegal immigrants to the authorities, *FNC’s The O’Reilly Factor*, June 8. [46]**

■ “The GOP campaigns as the party of family values and Senator Craig’s bathroom bust underscores the hypocrisy....There is former Republican Congressman Mark Foley, who built his social life on male pages; conservative pastor Ted Haggard, who had trysts with a male prostitute; Republican Senator David Vitter, who campaigned as a family man but later acknowledged encounters with a woman who police described as a prostitute. It all adds moral insult to the injuries being suffered today by the victims of Hurricane Katrina.”

— **MSNBC reporter David Shuster on *Hardball*, August 29. [28]**

■ “My take: If Karl Rove had been a professional wrestler, they might have called him ‘the Constitutional Crippler.’... He may be one of the great political operatives of all time, but from a lawyer’s perspective, as someone who studied the Constitution, relishes the rule of law, appreciates our courts, I will not shed a tear at his farewell bash.”

— **MSNBC General Manager Dan Abrams on *MSNBC’s Live with Dan Abrams*, August 13. [17]**

Blue State Brigade Award for Campaign Reporting

✓ **Senator Barack Obama:** “Let’s roll back the Bush tax cuts on the wealthiest Americans, let’s make certain that those resources go to the people who need it....We’re not going to solve it by pretending that issues of poverty and struggle among working families are just going to go away magically because the stock market is going up.”

Moderator Chris Matthews: “So much of what you say just grabs people like me, because it sounds like Bobby Kennedy. It sounds like the ‘60s at its absolute best.”

— **Exchange at AFSCME Democratic candidates forum shown live on MSNBC, June 19. [78 points]**

Runners-up:

■ **ABC's Sam Donaldson:** "[Senator Barack Obama is] an African-American. Is the country ready? Well, I think it is. And he said he thinks it is. He said he thinks he'll lose some votes because of that, and so the question is, what does the word 'some' mean?..."

Moderator George Stephanopoulos: "Maybe I'm wrong, maybe I'm naive, but Sam, I guess I think that anyone who's not going to vote for Barack Obama because he is black isn't going to vote for a Democrat anyway."

— **Exchange on ABC's *This Week*, May 13. [71]**

■ "She's [Hillary Clinton] a moral conservative. Which is to say that she also gets behind, you know, things like values issues. She's endorsed a plan to lower abortion rates that actually just passed through the House and Senate conference committee this week."

— **Time's Amy Sullivan on MSNBC's *Tucker*, Nov. 8. [57]**

■ "With a train whistle in the background and the sweet smell of freshly cut grass in the air, John Edwards campaigned this month next to a cornfield and a big sign proclaiming: 'This is John Edwards Country.' Surrounding him were about 100 voters, all seated on outdoor chairs provided by the local Congregational church, in a scene that could not have been more picturesquely American — democracy in action at its most intimate level."

— **Beginning of *New York Times* reporter Leslie Wayne's July 22 profile of Edwards. [33]**

Madness of King George Award

✓ "You could argue that even the world's worst fascist dictators at least meant well. They honestly thought [they] were doing good things for their countries by suppressing blacks/eliminating Jews/eradicating free enterprise/repressing individual thought/killing off rivals/invading neighbors, etc....Bush set a new precedent. He came into office with the attitude of 'I'm so tired of the public good. What about my good? What about my rich friends' good?'"

— **Ex-*Washington Post* sports reporter and *Seinfeld* writer Peter Mehlman in a June 20 *Huffington Post* blog item. [68 points]**

Runners-up:

■ "Probably there should be a rule against it. But there's a rule against murder. If someone had murdered Hitler — a journalist interviewing him had murdered him — the world would be a better place. I only feel good, as a citizen, about getting rid of George Bush, who has been the most destructive president in my lifetime. I certainly don't regret it."

— ***New Yorker* magazine writer Mark Singer explaining why he donated \$250 to the liberal "Victory Campaign 2004." [57]**

■ "Joe Scarborough did a whole week of panel discussions on whether he [President Bush] was an idiot....People who were defending him were saying, 'Well, he's just inarticulate.' But inarticulate doesn't explain foreign policy. I mean, it's not that complicated. The man is a rube. He is a dolt. He is a yokel on the world stage. He is a Gilligan who

cannot find his ass with two hands. He is a vain half-wit who interrupts one incoherent sentence with another incoherent sentence. And I hope I'm not piling on, Jay."

— **HBO's Bill Maher on NBC's *Tonight Show*, Feb. 20. [48]**

■ "Good evening. A President who lied us into a war and, in so doing, needlessly killed 3,584 of our family and friends and neighbors; a President whose administration initially tried to destroy the first man to nail that lie; a President whose henchmen then ruined the career of the intelligence asset that was his wife when intelligence assets were never more essential to the viability of the Republic; a President like that has tonight freed from the prospect of prison the only man ever to come to trial for one of the component felonies in what may be the greatest crime of this young century."

— **Keith Olbermann on Bush commuting Lewis Libby's prison sentence, MSNBC's *Countdown*, July 2. [44]**

Channeling the Nut Roots Award

✓ **MSNBC's Chris Matthews:** "Russ Feingold wants to censure the President, the Vice President..."

Left-wing filmmaker Michael Moore: "Good idea....Personally I'd like to see a perp walk coming out of the West Wing of the White House."

Matthews: "Do you think they're guilty of war crimes?"

Moore: "Absolutely....I think we need a trial, in this country, where Mr. Cheney and Mr. Bush would be brought up on charges for causing the deaths of so many people...."

Matthews: "It's interesting if you go back....the Nuremberg Trials weren't about the genocide, it was about waging an aggressive war. I love reading some of that language. It's interesting."

— **MSNBC's *Hardball*, July 23. [79 points]**

Runners-up:

■ "The list of Bush administration crimes is very real, but I have not paid much attention to the blogs, petitions and other efforts to promote impeachment, on the theory that they are diversionary to the more important efforts to end the war in Iraq....The crimes are real and probably impeachable, and the monarchical arrogance of the Bush-Cheney administration is monumental. But the timing is wrong."

— **Former NBC and CNN newsman Ken Bode, now the ombudsman for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, in a July 20 column in the *Indianapolis Star*. [54]**

■ "[Democratic presidential candidate Chris] Dodd also said this: 'If we become preoccupied with an impeachment process, I think we could turn off an awful lot of people who might otherwise be willing to support Democrats and be willing to change the direction of the country in the fall of 2008,' unquote. So, Senator Dodd is putting the election prospects of the Democratic Party next year ahead of whether or not President Bush might be guilty of high crimes and misdemeanors....Congress's job is oversight of the executive branch — unless, of course, that oversight interferes with getting elected."

— **CNN's Jack Cafferty, *The Situation Room*, Aug. 21. [40]**

Media Millionaires for Higher Taxes

✓ "It takes leadership. After World War II, we maintained the infrastructure we had and we built an incredible network of highways, and leaders in both parties agreed that these were priorities. Now we have this tax-averse society, rallied by the Republicans, tax-averse, where everything becomes sort of a right-wing, libertarian refusal to let government spend any money or raise any money."

— *Newsweek's Eleanor Clift discussing the Minneapolis bridge collapse, August 25 McLaughlin Group.* [74 points]

Runners-up:

■ "You're also looking at a [global warming] solution here in Europe: smaller vehicles, more energy efficient, many which use diesel fuel which is more efficient. And the price of gas here is \$6 a gallon to discourage guzzling. A lot of big ideas and innovations coming out of Europe."

— *ABC's Chris Cuomo reporting from Paris for Earth Day, April 20 Good Morning America.* [52]

■ "Each and every candidate [in] each and every campaign is forced to respond to this litmus test of 'No New Taxes.' How are we gonna get taxes passed when you can't get anything done in the Congress?...Government's gotta get bigger to help governors in various states."

— *Fill-in host Mike Barnicle leading a panel discussion on MSNBC's Hardball, August 2.* [48]

■ **Host George Stephanopoulos:** "You were Secretary of Energy. Energy independence, as you say, is going to be one of the number one issues in the campaign. And you've talked about alternative energy. But isn't it going to take real sacrifice, real cutbacks in consumption if we're going to be energy independent?...Higher gas taxes?"

Governor Bill Richardson (D-NM): "It's going to be a collaborative effort. No, you don't have to do it with taxes...."

Stephanopoulos: "But aren't higher energy taxes the best way to get people to conserve?"

— *ABC's This Week, January 21.* [43]

O Great Goreacle Award

✓ **Co-host Harry Smith:** "President Bush getting ready to go to Europe for the G-8. The folks in the European Union want to do emissions reductions. The President said yesterday we're not going to participate....If you were president, you would have probably signed on?"

Former Vice President Al Gore: "Yeah, yeah."

Smith: "Do you mind if I-? [holds up a 'Gore 2008' pin]...There you go. You can hold it. [laughter]....Here, let's see what it looks like. [holds pin to Gore's lapel]...All right, all right. Save that in a freeze frame."

— *Exchange on CBS's The Early Show, May 30.* [64 points]

Runners-up:

■ "Incredible as it may seem, Al Gore is not only totally carbon neutral, but geek-chic cool. No velvet rope can stop him....'He is more popular now than he ever was in office, and he knows it,' says Laurie David, one of the producers of *Inconvenient Truth* and a Hollywood environ-

mental activist (and wife of *Seinfeld* co-creator Larry David) who has traveled around the world promoting the film with Gore. 'He's a superhero now.'"

— *Washington Post* reporter William Booth in a February 25 front-page profile of Gore headlined, "Al Gore, Rock Star; Oscar Hopeful May Be America's Coolest Ex-Vice President Ever." [57]

■ "You know, Bob, you'd still be holding your breath and kicking your feet if what had happened to Al Gore in Florida had happened to you. He rose above a great injustice....He became a prophet on an issue that is crucially important to the world."

— *Ex-Time* reporter Margaret Carlson to *Chicago Sun-Times* columnist Bob Novak on Bloomberg TV's *Political Capital*, October 13. [45]

■ **Matt Lauer:** "From your point of view, if you were to run for President you could take this issue [global warming] to the next level, even during just a campaign. And if you were fortunate enough to win the presidency, you'd sit in the most powerful office in the free world with a real chance to make — you could be in a position to save the planet, without putting too much emphasis on it. Wouldn't that be enough of a reason to run for President for you?"

Former Vice President Al Gore: "Well, I appreciate the impulse behind the question. I am not planning to run...."

Lauer: "But as someone who feels as passionately about the subject as you do, and your documentary is evidence of that, why pass up the opportunity to have that world stage again?"

— *Exchange on NBC's Today, December 6, 2006.* [43]

■ "Al Gore — the improbably charismatic, Academy Award-winning, Nobel Prize-nominated environmental prophet with an army of followers and huge reserves of political and cultural capital at his command....[Losing the 2000 election] changed Gore for the better. He dedicated himself to a larger cause, doing everything in his power to sound the alarm about the climate crisis, and that decision helped transform the way Americans think about global warming and carried Gore to a new state of grace....No wonder friends, party elders, moneymen and green leaders are still trying to talk him into running."

— *Time's Eric Pooley in his May 28 cover story, "The Last Temptation of Al Gore."* [40]

Politics of Meaninglessness Award for Silliest Analysis

✓ "Perhaps the outpouring of sympathy for [the falsely arrested Duke lacrosse players] Reade Seligman, Collin Finnerty and David Evans is just a bit misplaced....As students of Duke University or other elite institutions, these young men will get on with their privileged lives....They are very differently situated in life from, say, the young women of the Rutgers University women's basketball team."

— *Nightline* co-anchor Terry Moran writing on his "Pushback" blog on ABCNews.com on April 12, the day after the North Carolina Attorney General declared the players innocent of highly-publicized rape charges. [66 points]

Runners-up:

■ “As part of our ongoing series of reports on the environment, ‘America Goes Green,’ we take on the question that can make otherwise competent adults quake with fear. We’ve all been there. You come to the end of the checkout line and then comes that question: ‘Paper or plastic?’ For that one brief moment, we grocery buyers are made to feel like the fate of the planet hinges on our decision.”
— **NBC’s Brian Williams on the May 7 *Nightly News*. [47]**

■ “[High ratings for Fox’s *American Idol*] cannot solely be explained by technological advances or a regression in human nature. It cannot be a coincidence that television voting rights arose so soon after the 2000 election left slightly more than half the voting population feeling cheated. Those who didn’t go to the polls and fear that their abstention inadvertently made possible the invasion of Iraq may feel even worse. *Idol* could be a displacement ritual: a psychological release that allows people to vote — and even vote often — in a contest that has no dangerous or even lasting consequences.”
— **New York Times TV reporter Alessandra Stanley in an April 4 article. [46]**

■ **CNN’s Larry King:** “Are you sorry about that [60 Minutes National Guard story] now?”
Ex-CBS anchor Dan Rather: “No.”
King: “You think the report was correct?”
Rather: “Yes. And I think most people know by now that it was correct.”
— **Exchange on CNN’s *Larry King Live*, September 20. [37]**

Good Morning Morons Award

✓ “So I’m running in the park on Saturday, in shorts, thinking this [warm weather] is great, but are we all gonna die? You know? I can’t, I can’t figure this out.”
— **Co-host Meredith Vieira talking about global warming on NBC’s *Today*, January 8. [57 points]**

Runners-up:

■ **Co-host Diane Sawyer:** “A number of people have already said, ‘Is there anything surprising, personal about [Iranian] President [Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad that we didn’t know?’ Well, it turns out, someone told me he cries a lot. That he is dramatically sentimental and sympathetic if someone comes up and expresses a personal plight. So I just asked him, are you often in tears?”
Mahmoud Ahmadinejad: “Yes, that’s true. Not only for Iranians, of course, they are very close to me and I love all Iranians. And anywhere, when I see people suffering, I have the same reaction....Even when I see on TV that, for example, some Americans, because of tornadoes or a hurricane, they have lost their homes, I become sad.”
— **ABC’s *Good Morning America*, February 13. [52]**

■ **Co-host Matt Lauer:** “The book is called *The World Without Us*, and it asks the question what would happen to planet Earth if human beings were to suddenly disappear....And really it’s all about trying to figure out how long it would

take nature to reclaim what we’ve created.”

• **Co-host Meredith Vieira:** “The mess.”

• **Lauer:** “How long it would take nature to fix the mess we’ve made?...Would the Earth miss us at all? How long would it take for it to fix the problems we created?”
• — **NBC’s *Today*, September 4. [44]**

Media Hero Award

✓ “He was not what I expected. He was very dignified. He was warm, friendly. He likes the U.S. It’s George Bush that he doesn’t like. He also was very personal. He talked about how hard his life was, that he wished he could be in love but you can’t be when you are heading a country.”
• — **ABC’s Barbara Walters recounting her interview with Venezuela’s Hugo Chavez, March 16 *Nightline*. [79]**

Runners-up:

• ■ “For the first time in the 218-year history of the Congress, a woman was voted by her colleagues to be Speaker of the House. Nancy Pelosi, Democrat from California, took the gavel. But in a picture perhaps even more symbolic, the new Speaker was on the floor for a time, holding her 6-year-old [6-month-old] grandson, all the while giving directions on how events were to proceed. It seemed the ultimate in multitasking: Taking care of the children, and the country.”
• — **ABC *World News* anchor Charles Gibson, Jan. 4. [75]**

• ■ “Historian Douglas Brinkley says he [Jimmy Carter] used the White House as a stepping stone for greater things. He intervened in civil wars around the globe, monitored elections, and confronted dictators. And Carter’s work for Habitat for Humanity shows that even for someone who was once the most powerful man on Earth, there’s no higher calling than helping your neighbor. To cap it all, in 2002 he won the Nobel Peace Prize. Of course he’s been outspoken, criticizing President Bush and equating some Israeli policies with apartheid, and critics have accused him of acting decidedly unpresidential. Agree with him or not, you have to respect him for sticking to his principles. At 82, Jimmy Carter is having an impact still, perhaps even more than when he was President.”
• — **CBS *Evening News* anchor Katie Couric on her June 19 “Katie Couric’s Notebook,” a video posting to her “Couric & Co.” blog at CBSNews.com. [56]**

• ■ **Co-anchor Julie Chen:** “You’ve taken personal action. Tell me what are some of the changes you’ve made in your day-to-day life.”
• **Actor Leonardo DiCaprio:** “I try to live a ‘green lifestyle,’ quote/unquote. I mean, I’ve, I’ve done the things that I can do in my house to make it, my house green, energy efficient appliances. I drive a hybrid car. I have solar panels.”
• **Chen:** “Where did this passion come from?”...
• **Co-anchor Harry Smith:** “He’s such a smart guy.”
• **Chen:** “He is a smart guy and he’s such a great spokesperson to have for this very important cause.”
• — **CBS’s *Early Show* promoting *The 11th Hour*, DiCaprio’s apocalyptic movie about global warming, August 13. [38]**

Tin Foil Hat Award for Crazy Conspiracy Theories

✓ **Co-host Joy Behar:** "Is there such a thing as a man-made stroke? In other words, did someone do this to him?..."

Co-host Elisabeth Hasselbeck: "Why is everything coming from the liberal perspective a conspiracy?..."

Behar: "I know what this [Republican] Party is capable of." — **Discussing Democratic Senator Tim Johnson's illness on ABC's *The View*, December 14, 2006. [72 points]**

Runners-up:

■ **Co-host Joy Behar:** "One thing is that Giuliani post-9/11 appeared to be very heroic. But now they're saying that he was not that efficient in helping the people who were the recovery people, the responders."

Rosie O'Donnell: "Also he was, you know, instrumental in making sure that all of the steel was removed and shipped to Canada right away, Giuliani — was shipped to China, sorry, right away."

Behar: "For what purpose?"

O'Donnell: "Well, to get it out of there and to have, you know, all of the stu — but it was all gone. So there was no, like, metal to test."

— **Exchange on ABC's *The View*, May 14. [67 points]**

■ "Our third story in the Countdown, from the mind-bending idea that four guys dressed as pizza delivery men were going to outgun all the soldiers at Fort Dix, to the not-too-thought-out plan to blow up JFK Airport by lighting a match 40 miles away....The so-called plot happens to be revealed the day before the second Democratic presidential debate and as the scandal continues to unfold over the firings of U.S. attorneys and their replacements by political hacks. The so-called plot is announced by the Bush-appointed U.S. attorney for Brooklyn, New York, and by the police chief of New York City, the father of a correspondent for Fox News Channel."

— **MSNBC's Keith Olbermann on his *Countdown* program June 4, outlining his claimed "Nexus of Politics and Terror," arguing the Bush administration manipulates news about terror plots for political advantage. [35]**

Perky Princess Award for Katie's Cutesy Comments

✓ "Do you worry at all that non-believers may feel excluded and diminished at a time when we're so divided about so much?"

— **Katie Couric to *The Nativity Story's* Catherine Hardwicke and Mike Rich in a December 4, 2006 *CBS Evening News* story about Hollywood movies based on Biblical themes. [84 points]**

Runners-up:

■ "As the throngs of celebrities greeted Al Gore as a secular saint, I wondered if this might usher in a backlash against environmentalists....It seems like we're reaching critical mass when it comes to this issue. And all the ex-

perts agree. Well, almost every expert. (There are a handful of scientists — many of them on the payroll of big oil companies — who wonder if global warming is a reality.) But my fervent hope is that Hollywood's embrace of Al Gore doesn't give people an excuse to condemn and mock the effort — and oppose taking steps that we as a society need to take to deal with the issue of climate change."

— **Anchor Katie Couric writing about the Oscars on her CBSNews.com blog, "Couric & Co.," February 26. [69]**

■ "Also in Washington today, a lot of excitement on Capitol Hill. A movie star showed up to testify before Congress — a movie star named Al Gore."

— **Katie Couric on the March 21 *CBS Evening News*. [48]**

■ "More than 46 million Americans have no health insurance. So when it comes to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and good health, all men are not created equal."

— **Katie Couric introducing a story about a doctor who cares for poor patients, March 12 *CBS Evening News*. [37]**

Barbra Streisand Political IQ Award for Celebrity Vapidity

✓ "I just want to say something: 655,000 Iraqi civilians are dead. Who are the terrorists?...If you were in Iraq, and the other country, the United States, the richest in the world, invaded your country and killed 655,000 of your citizens, what would you call us?"

— **Co-host Rosie O'Donnell on ABC's *The View*, May 17. [64 points]**

Runners-up:

■ "Over the past six years we've had to add to the American picture: rendition, illegal wiretapping, voter suppression, no *habeas corpus*, the neglect of our great city New Orleans and the people, an attack on the Constitution and the loss of our best young men and women in a tragic war. And this is a song about things that shouldn't happen here, happening here. And so right now we plan to do something about it — we plan to sing about it."

— **Bruce Springsteen introducing his song "Living in the Future" before a live concert on NBC's *Today*, September 28. [60]**

■ "Let's face it: If the mothers ruled the world, there would be no Goddamned wars in the first place."

— **Actress Sally Field at the Emmy awards, September 16. [43]**

■ "I don't know what it's going to take for people to really wake up and understand that they [the Bush administration] are liars and they are murderers. I'm sorry....After the Katrina incident, after the incompetence that took place there, after the incompetence and the lying about this war. [Applause] I don't understand it."

— **ABC's Joy Behar on *The View*, February 28. [40]**

■ “I don’t believe that any gun should be in the hand of a thinking, feeling, breathing human being. Americans are by nature filled with rage-slash-fear. And guns are a huge part of our culture. I know I’m crazy because I’m only supposed to say that in Europe. But violence corrupts absolutely.”

— **Actress Jodie Foster in an interview with *Entertainment Weekly* to promote her new movie, *The Brave One*, September 7 issue. [32]**

■ **Reporter Dawn Fratangelo:** “How has this administration affected your songwriting?”

Singer Mary Chapin Carpenter: “It’s made me more angry. I feel despair when I turn on the news or I read the newspaper. I feel despair that we’re, we’re never going to be able to regain the respect of the countries of this world. That we’re, we’re putting our children in danger of not having a future.”

— **NBC’s *Today*, March 6. [20]**

Drive By Media Award for Shooting at the Competition

✓ **Matt Lauer:** “He [Rush Limbaugh] makes a living poking fun at Democrats, but now some think he has gone a little too far in taking on Senator Barack Obama....”

Reporter Michael Okwu: “Weeks before the Imus controversy, Rush Limbaugh started airing this ditty about Senator Barack Obama:”

Song parody: “Barack the Magic Negro lives in D.C.”

Okwu: “Which lead some to wonder, has Limbaugh been getting a free pass?...”

Paul Waldman, Media Matters for America: “This is basically the radio equivalent of a black-faced, minstrel show. You’re going back to *Amos and Andy* and all of those, kind of, racist shows in the past.”

Okwu: “For his part, Obama says he doesn’t listen to Limbaugh but says being targeted is part of being a politician....Legitimate political satire or something darker?”

— **NBC’s *Today*, May 21. Limbaugh’s parody was inspired by a black writer who used the term in a March 19 *Los Angeles Times* op-ed, “Obama the Magic Negro.” [79 points]**

Runners-up:

■ “A top Democrat is coming out guns blazing against conservative radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh. It’s an angry new shot in the dispute over the war in Iraq and Limbaugh’s charge that some veterans who are criticizing the war are, in his words, quote, ‘phony soldiers.’”

— **CNN’s Wolf Blitzer on *The Situation Room*, October 1. In fact, Limbaugh was talking about leftist anti-war groups touting tales of U.S. atrocities from Jesse Macbeth, a soldier who flunked out of basic training and who is going to prison for making it all up. [61]**

■ “Why don’t you just brush off these comments by Limbaugh, like an annoying gnat, instead of legitimizing them and bringing more attention to them?”

— **Co-host Meredith Vieira to former Democratic presidential candidate Wesley Clark, who is pushing to get Limbaugh removed from Armed Forces Radio, on NBC’s *Today*, October 3. [54]**

■ **Host Keith Olbermann:** “I’ll ask you the ten million dollar question: How does Rush Limbaugh or Michael Savage get away with worse than what Don Imus said?”

• **Air America host Sam Seder:** “...Corporations have said we’re not going to tolerate this any more, and the next time Limbaugh slips up, which I think is inevitable, I think you’re going to see this sort of same type of reaction.”

• **Olbermann:** “It’s the best thing I’ve heard in a couple of days....From your lips to God’s ears!”

• — **MSNBC’s *Countdown*, April 12. [49]**

Not Biased Enough Award

✓ “As we saw in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq, the plantation mentality that governs Washington turned the press corps into sitting ducks for the war party, for government, and neoconservative propaganda and manipulation....What’s happened is not indifference or laziness or incompetence, but the fact that most journalists on the plantation have so internalized conventional wisdom that they simply accept that the system is working as it should. I’m doing a documentary this spring called *Buying the War*, and I can’t tell you again how many reporters have told me that it just never occurred to them that high officials would manipulate intelligence in order to go to war. Hello?”

• — **PBS’s Bill Moyers, in a January 12 speech to a conference on “media reform” aired four days later on the left-wing Pacifica network’s *Democracy Now*. [95 points]**

Runners-up:

• ■ “Comedians, such as yourself, Jon Stewart and others, are a valuable supplement, and here’s why: Good journalism at its best frequently speaks truth to power. What’s happened with journalists — again, I don’t except myself from this criticism — in some ways we’ve lost our guts. We need a spine transplant. What’s happened is comedians, in their own way, speak truth to power and fill that vacuum that we in journalism have too often left, particularly post 9/11.”

• — **Dan Rather to Bill Maher on HBO’s *Politically Incorrect*, March 16. [78]**

• ■ “If the watchdog doesn’t bark, how do you know there’s a burglar in the basement? And the press is supposed to be a watchdog. I’ll put it another way: if you think that the fire department in your neighborhood is in collusion with the arsonist, you want to know about it. And the fact of the matter is, in the build-up to the [Iraq] war the watchdog didn’t bark and the fire department — in this case the press — was in cahoots with the arsonist.”

• — **Bill Moyers promoting his anti-Bush special *Buying the War*, on PBS’s *Tavis Smiley*, April 23. [69]**

• ■ “For all the howling on the right, it’s difficult to argue that mainstream news organizations operate with anything approaching Fox’s partisan and ideological agenda. (E-mails: commence now.) But there’s no question many conservatives feel as wronged by elements of the mainstream media as Democrats do by Fox.”

• — **Longtime *Los Angeles Times* political reporter Ron Brownstein in a March 16 column. [42]**

Quote of the Year

✓ "As violence falls in Iraq, cemetery workers feel the pinch"

— **Headline over an October 16 story by McClatchy News Service reporters Jay Price and Qasim Zein.**

Runners-up:

■ "Al Qaeda really hurt us, but not as much as Rupert Murdoch has hurt us, particularly in the case of Fox News. Fox News is worse than Al Qaeda — worse for our society. It's as dangerous as the Ku Klux Klan ever was."

— **MSNBC anchor Keith Olbermann in an interview with *Playboy* magazine, October issue.**

■ "Everything you said about [withdrawing some troops from] Iraq yesterday, and everything you will say, is a deception, for the purpose of this one cynical, unacceptable, brutal goal: perpetuating this war indefinitely. War today, war tomorrow, war forever!...A man with any self respect, having inadvertently revealed such an evil secret, would

• have already resigned and fled the country! You have no remaining credibility about Iraq, sir!...Mr. Bush, our presence in Iraq must end, even if it means your resignation, even if it means your impeachment, even if it means a different Republican to serve out your term, even if it means a Democratic Congress and those true patriots among the Republicans standing up and denying you another penny for Iraq, other than for the safety and safe conduct home of our troops. This country cannot run the risk of what you can still do to this country in the next 500 days."

• — **MSNBC *Countdown* anchor Keith Olbermann addressing President Bush in a "Special Comment," September 4.**

• ■ "You know, I wanted to sit on a jury once and I was taken off the jury. And the judge said to me, 'Can, you know, can you tell the truth and be fair?' And I said, 'That's what journalists do.' And everybody in the courtroom laughed. It was the most hurtful moment I think I've ever had."

• — **Co-host Diane Sawyer joking on ABC's *Good Morning America* July 12, following a report on how some people try to avoid serving on a jury.**

2007 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, MRC President; author of *Whitewash: What the Media Won't Tell You About Hillary, But Conservatives Will*

Priscilla L. Buckley, contributing editor for *National Review*

Bill Cotterell, political editor at the *Tallahassee Democrat*

Blanquita Cullum, Podjockey.com

Bill Cunningham, radio talk show host, WLW in Cincinnati

Midge Decter, author; Heritage Foundation Board of Trustees

Bob Dutko, radio talk show host, WMUZ-FM in Detroit

Jim Eason, retired radio talk show host

Don Feder, former *Boston Herald* columnist; author, media consultant at Don Feder & Associates

Eric Fettmann, Associate Editorial Page Editor, *New York Post*

Ed Flynn, radio talk show host on WATR in Waterbury, CT

Michael Graham, radio talk show host, WTKK in Boston

Tim Graham, Director of Media Analysis, Media Research Center

Steven Greenhut, senior editorial writer, *Orange County Register*

Kirk Healy, Executive Producer, WDBO Radio in Orlando

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 consultant, Detroit

Cliff Kincaid, Editor, Accuracy in Media

Mark Larson, radio talk show host, 1700 AM in San Diego

Mark Levin, nationally syndicated radio talk show host

Jason Lewis, radio talk show host, KTLK in Minneapolis

Kathryn Jean Lopez, Editor of *National Review Online*

Brian Maloney, radio analyst, creator of The RadioEqualizer blog

Steve Malzberg, radio talk show host, WOR in New York City

Patrick McGuigan, contributing editor *The City Sentinel* in Oklahoma City

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

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

Jan Mickelson, radio talk show host on WHO in Des Moines

Paul Mirengoff, co-author of PowerLine blog

Robert D. Novak, syndicated columnist for the *Chicago Sun-Times*; author of *The Prince of Darkness*

Rich Noyes, Director of Research, Media Research Center

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

Matthew Sheffield, Executive Editor of MRC's NewsBusters blog

James Taranto, Editor of OpinionJournal.com

Philip Terzian, Literary Editor for *The Weekly Standard*

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

Chris Warden, Hall School of Journalism, Troy University

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

Walter E. Williams, economics professor, George Mason University

Thomas S. Winter, Editor-in-Chief of *Human Events*

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

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

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