

THE 23RD ANNUAL AWARDS FOR THE YEAR'S WORST REPORTING



THE BEST
NOTABLE
QUOTABLES
2010

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AMERICA'S
MEDIA
WATCHDOG™

A BI-WEEKLY COMPILATION OF THE LATEST
OUTRAGEOUS, SOMETIMES HUMOROUS,
QUOTES IN THE LIBERAL MEDIA.

Welcome to the Media Research Center's annual awards issue, a compilation of the most outrageous and/or humorous news media quotes from 2010 (December 2009 through November 2010).

To determine this year's winners, a panel of 46 radio talk show hosts, magazine editors, columnists, editorial writers, and expert 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 alongside each quote. Each judge was also asked to choose a "Quote of the Year" denoting the most outrageous quote of 2010.

The MRC's Michelle Humphrey and Melissa Lopez distributed and counted the ballots. MRC intern Alex Fitzsimmons helped produce the numerous audio and video clips included in the Web-posted version. Rich Noyes and Brent Baker assembled this issue and Brad Ash posted the entire package to the MRC's Web site: www.MRC.org.



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THE POISON TEA POT AWARD FOR SMEARING THE ANTI-OBAMA RABBLE

WINNER

Tavis Smiley (92 points)

Author Ayaan Hirsi Ali, talking about radical Muslims: “Somehow, the idea got into their minds that to kill other people is a great thing to do and that they would be rewarded in the hereafter.”

Host Tavis Smiley: “But Christians do that every single day in this country.”

Ali: “Do they blow people up every day?”

Smiley: “Yes. Oh, Christians, every day, people walk into post offices, they walk into schools, that’s what Columbine is — I could do this all day long.... There are folk in the Tea Party, for example, every day who are being recently arrested for making threats against elected officials, for calling people ‘nigger’ as they walk into Capitol Hill, for spitting on people. That’s within the political — that’s within the body politic of this country.”

— PBS’s *Tavis Smiley*, May 25.



RUNNERS - UP

Frank Rich (41 points)

“There’s nothing entertaining about watching goons hurl venomous slurs at congressmen like the civil rights hero John Lewis and the openly gay Barney Frank.... How curious that a mob fond of likening President Obama to Hitler knows so little about history that it doesn’t recognize its own small-scale mimicry of Kristallnacht.”

— *New York Times* columnist Frank Rich, March 28.

Bob Schieffer (35 points)

“A year-long debate that’s been rancorous and mean from the start turned even nastier yesterday. Demonstrators protesting the bill poured into the halls of Congress shouting ‘Kill the bill!’ and ‘Made in the USSR.’ And as tempers rose, they hurled racial epithets, even at civil rights icon John Lewis of Georgia, and sexual slurs at Massachusetts Democrat Barney Frank. Other legislators said the protesters spit on them, and one lawmaker said it was like a page out of a time machine.”

— Bob Schieffer leading off CBS’s *Face the Nation*, March 21.



RODNEY DANGERFIELD AWARD FOR DEMANDING RESPECT FOR OBAMA'S "ACHIEVEMENTS"

WINNER

Lesley Stahl (66 points)

"It reminded me of a doctor who has this horrible burn victim come into the hospital, and he saves the guy's life — this is our economy — saves the guy's life, but the guy wakes up and he's got scars all over his face, and that's all he sees, that's all anybody sees. The guy's living, but he looks awful. And how — what's the doctor supposed to say? And that's what he's [Obama is] fighting, he's fighting an economy that just won't give him anything.... He cannot get any traction on what he's accomplished."

— CBS *60 Minutes* correspondent Lesley Stahl on MSNBC's *Morning Joe*, October 18.



RUNNERS - UP

Joy Behar (49 points)

Co-host Joy Behar: "You've really done a lot, I think. I mean, you've signed 200-plus laws into — since you're in office. You have — financial reform has taken place. You got a health care — I mean, you put two women on the Supreme Court. I could go on and on about your accomplishments. And yet, the right-wing, through Fox News and other outlets, they seem to be hijacking the narrative. Where, on your side, is the narrative? Where is your attack dog to come out and tell the American people, 'Listen, this is what we did?'"

President Obama: "Joy, that's your job."

Behar, over audience applause: "I do it! But, I'm only one woman!"

— Exchange on ABC's *The View*, July 29.



Christiane Amanpour (47 points)

"People from all over the world, frankly, say to me, here comes a President with a huge mandate, a huge reservoir of goodwill, huge promises to change, and, with all of that, his popularity is down. People don't appreciate some of the amazing legislative agenda that he's accomplished."

— Host Christiane Amanpour to White House advisor David Axelrod on ABC's *This Week*, September 26.



DAMN THOSE CONSERVATIVES AWARD

WINNER

Joy Behar (55 points)

Co-host Joy Behar: “You know what I’d like to see her do? I’d like to see her [Nevada GOP Senate candidate Sharron Angle] do this ad in the South Bronx. Come here, bitch! Come to New York and do it.”

Co-host Sherri Shepherd: “We’re praying for you. We’re praying for you.”

Co-host Elisabeth Hasselbeck: “Even Joy is praying for her.”

Behar: “I am not praying for her. I’m telling you right now. She’s going to Hell... She’s going to Hell, this bitch.”

—ABC’s *The View*, October 26, talking about Angle’s ad against illegal immigration.



RUNNERS-UP

Bill Press (44 points)

“Just once — probably never get reelected if you ever said it — I would like to hear somebody say, ‘The voters have spoken, the bastards.’ Or, ‘The voters have spoken. What a bunch of idiots.’ ‘The voters have spoken. God, they’re dumb. Dumb as Hell.’ I just wish I’d hear somebody say that, because I think that happens to be the case this particular midterm elections.”

—Longtime CNN and MSNBC contributor Bill Press on his radio program, November 4.

Joe Klein (43 points)

“I looked up the definition of sedition, which is ‘conduct or language inciting rebellion against the authority of the state.’ And a lot of these statements, especially the ones coming from people like Glenn Beck, and to a certain extent Sarah Palin, rub right next — right up close to being seditious.”

—*Time*’s Joe Klein on *The Chris Matthews Show*, April 18.



Cenk Uygur (42 points)

“Tonight, we start with the party of hate. The Republican Party in this country has been running on hate and division for the last 50 years.... What black person, gay guy or girl, immigrant or Muslim American in their right mind would vote for the Republican Party? They might as well hang a sign around their neck saying, ‘I hate myself.’”

—Fill-in host Cenk Uygur on MSNBC’s *The Ed Show*, August 26.



THE SHOVEL READY MEDIA AWARD FOR CLAIMING SUCCESS FOR OBAMA'S "STIMULUS"

WINNER

Matt Lauer (57 points)

“When you say the country's not better off than it was \$1.8 trillion ago — when the President took office, the Dow Jones was about 8,000; it's above 10,000 now. The GDP was declining at about six percent; it's rising at about six percent right now. We were talking about the possibility of a Great Depression; most people aren't talking about that anymore. So, aren't we better off?...Had the administration not taken some of the steps it did take, though, might not that unemployment figure, be at 12 or 13 percent?”

— NBC's Matt Lauer to former GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney on *Today*, March 2.



RUNNERS-UP

Terry Moran (45 points)

“Big fanfare this week. The Obama administration fanned out across the country: “The stimulus worked.” The President made speeches, sounded a little frustrated that people don't get it, at least polls show, that they don't understand there were tax cuts and things like that. What did they do wrong? They're playing defense on what was one of their major accomplishments.”

— ABC's Terry Moran to Governor Ed Rendell (D-PA) on *This Week*, February 21.



Chip Reid (44 points)

White House correspondent Chip Reid: “In Washington, D.C., about 20 people are working on this road project. Manager Matthew Johns calls the stimulus a lifesaver. [to Johns] So it's certainly possible that you and these guys would be without work right now if it weren't for the stimulus package?”

Matthew Johns: “Absolutely.”...

Reid: “Many independent economists put the number of jobs saved or created at about 1.8 million, but to the great frustration of the White House, most Americans simply refuse to believe it.”

— CBS *Evening News*, February 17.



THEY DON'T MISS HIM YET AWARD FOR STILL BASHING BUSH

WINNER

Joe Klein (77 points)

“This [the oil spill] is more Bush’s second Katrina than Obama’s first.”

— *Time’s* Joe Klein on *The Chris Matthews Show*, May 30.



RUNNERS-UP

Jonathan Alter (57 points)

“The oil spill is the perfect metaphor for Obama’s presidency so far. It’s been cleaning up a lot of the messes left to him by his predecessors, whether it was bank bailouts, auto bailouts, Afghanistan — which turned out to be a much bigger mess than anybody anticipated — preventing a depression that, you know, began to happen on George Bush’s watch. So this is more of the same.”

— *Newsweek’s* Jonathan Alter on MSNBC’s *The Daily Rundown*, June 10.



Michael Hirsh (46 points)

“America hasn’t recovered from the serious blows to its stature delivered by nearly a decade of policy debacles....[Obama] inherited a Herculean task: the Augean-stable-size mess left behind by George W. Bush. First there was the diversion of military resources and attention from Afghanistan to Iraq — a draining, misdirected war and occupation that many believe never should have been launched. Then there was the long period of fiscal, regulatory, and financial recklessness that contributed to the worst-ever downturn since the Great Depression. Finally, Washington squandered its chance to lead on climate change.”

— *Newsweek’s* Michael Hirsh in the August 23 & 30 cover story ranking “The Best Countries in the World,” which awarded the U.S. 11th place.

Helen Thomas (35 points)

“When are you going to get out of Afghanistan? Why are we continuing to kill and die there? What is the real excuse — and don’t give us this Bushism, ‘If we don’t go there, they’ll all come here!’”

— Longtime White House correspondent Helen Thomas to President Obama at his May 27 press conference.



NO WONDER IT SOLD FOR \$1 AWARD FOR NEWSWEEK'S PRICELESS BIAS

WINNER

Allison Samuels and Jerry Adler (87 points)

“No one has a quicker mind or tongue than [Al] Sharpton. His political instincts are unmatched, and his personal charisma has been undimmed since high school....He is out there all alone, still standing on the same principle he first enunciated in his housing project in Brooklyn: poor people have the same rights as rich ones, to justice in the streets and in the courts. If he didn't exist, we might, in fact, need to invent him.”

— *Newsweek's* Allison Samuels and Jerry Adler in their August 2 cover profile: “The Reinvention of the Reverend Al.”

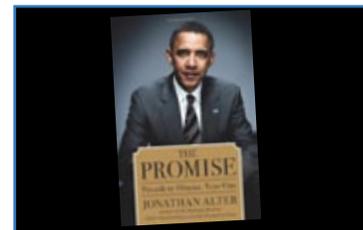


RUNNERS - UP

Jonathan Alter (54 points)

“...What is the President really like on the job and off-hours, using what his best friend called ‘a Rubik’s Cube in his brain?’ These questions are answered here for the first time. We see how a surprisingly cunning Obama took effective charge in Washington several weeks before his election.... Alter takes the reader inside the room as Obama prevents a fistfight involving a Congressman, coldly reprimands the military brass for insubordination, crashes the key meeting at the Copenhagen Climate Change conference, and bounces back after a disastrous Massachusetts election to redeem a promise that had eluded presidents since FDR....”

— From Simon & Schuster’s promotional language for *The Promise: President Obama, Year One*, a book released May 18, by *Newsweek* senior editor Jonathan Alter.



Jonathan Alter (47 points)

“We [the press corps] are so eager to promote ourselves with the smartest take on how President Obama and the Democrats got themselves in this pickle that we haven’t done a good job explaining the stakes....A right-wing Republican takeover of Congress and state capitals isn’t something to accept with indifference. Midterms matter, and voters tempted to skip this election should have their heads examined.”

— *Newsweek's* Jonathan Alter in the magazine’s November 1 edition, “Why the Midterms Matter: The GOP’s agenda has to be stopped.”

MEDIA HERO AWARD

WINNER

Diane Sawyer (60 points)

“All agree she gets credit for locking up this vote, one of the biggest since Medicare in the 1960s. And she’s said to have done it with an epic blend of persuasion, muscle and will, even when half the town said it couldn’t be done.... Their indefatigable, unwavering almost 70-year-old Speaker, mother of five, grandmother of seven....[to Pelosi] What do you think your dad and your mom would have said about this moment?”

—Diane Sawyer interviewing House Speaker Nancy Pelosi on *World News*, March 22.



RUNNERS-UP

Christiane Amanpour (54 points)

“You, by all accounts, are one of the most, if not the most, powerful and successful Speakers in the history of the United States. You’ve passed so much legislation. The President was elected with a significant majority. You had control of both houses of Congress. And yet, now, people are talking about you might lose your majority in the House. The gap seems to be growing wider between what’s achieved and what’s making an impact with the people. How did this happen?”

—New ABC host Christiane Amanpour to Speaker Nancy Pelosi on *This Week*, August 1.



Lesley Stahl (45 points)

Correspondent Lesley Stahl: “When all is said and done — and many will be surprised to hear this — Jimmy Carter got more of his programs passed than Reagan and Nixon, Ford, Bush 1, Clinton or Bush 2.”

Former President Jimmy Carter: “I had the best batting average in the Congress in recent history of any President, except Lyndon Johnson.”...

Stahl: “A lot of critics of yours, when you were President, say that you’ve been a fantastic ex-President. You hear that all the time.”

Carter: “I don’t mind that.”

—CBS’s *60 Minutes*, September 19.



MASTER OF HIS DOMAIN AWARD FOR OBAMA PUFFERY

WINNER

Chris Matthews (63 points)

Clip of Barack Obama from 2008: “My family gave me love. They gave me an education. And most of all, they gave me hope. Hope, hope that in America, no dream is beyond our grasp if we reach for it, and fight for it, and work for it.”

MSNBC’s Chris Matthews: “I get the same thrill up my leg, all over me, every time I hear those words. I’m sorry, ladies and gentlemen, that’s me. He’s talking about my country and nobody does it better. Can President Obama stir us again and help his party keep power this November?”

— **Setting up a segment on MSNBC’s *Hardball*, September 7.**

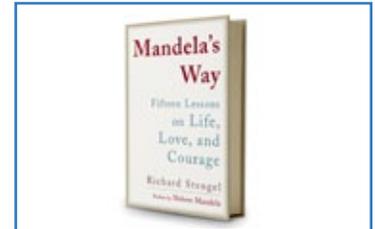


RUNNERS - UP

Rick Stengel (54 points)

“It is impossible to write about Nelson Mandela these days and not compare him to another potentially transformational black leader, Barack Obama. The parallels are many.... And while it took twenty-seven years in prison to mold the Nelson Mandela we know, the forty-eight-year-old American president seems to have achieved a Mandela-like temperament without the long years of sacrifice.... Whatever Mandela may or may not think of the new American President, Obama is in many ways his true successor on the world stage.”

— **From *Time* managing editor Rick Stengel’s introduction to his new self-help book, *Mandela’s Way: Fifteen Lessons on Life, Love, and Courage*, quoted by *Politico*’s Mike Allen in a March 30 Web posting.**



Michael Leahy and Juliet Eilperin (37 points)

“The moment was vintage Obama — emphasizing his zest for inquiry, his personal involvement, his willingness to make the tough call, his search for middle ground. If an Obama brand exists, it is his image as a probing, cerebral President conducting an exhaustive analysis of the issues so that the best ideas can emerge, and triumph.”

— ***Washington Post* writers Michael Leahy and Juliet Eilperin in an October 12 story about the President’s pre-oil spill endorsement of offshore drilling.**

DUMB AND DUMBER AWARD FOR MATTHEWS AND OLBERMANN'S LEFTIST BLATHERINGS

WINNER

Keith Olbermann (67 points)

“In Scott Brown, we have an irresponsible, homophobic, racist, reactionary, ex-nude model, teabagging supporter of violence against women and against politicians with whom he disagrees. In any other time in our history, this man would have been laughed off the stage as unqualified and a disaster in the making by the most conservative of conservatives.”

— MSNBC's Keith Olbermann on *Countdown*, January 18, the night before Massachusetts' special election.



RUNNERS-UP

Chris Matthews (48 points)

Chris Matthews: “Congresswoman Bachmann, are you hypnotized tonight? Has someone hypnotized you? Because no matter what I ask you, you give the same answer. Are you hypnotized? Has someone put you under a trance tonight? That you give me the same answer no matter what question I put to you?”

Rep. Michele Bachmann: “I think the American people are the ones that are finally speaking tonight. We’re coming out of our trance....I think people are thrilled tonight. I imagine that thrill is probably maybe not quite so tingly on your leg anymore.”

— From MSNBC's election night coverage, November 2.



Keith Olbermann (41 points)

“[The Tea Party-backed Republicans are] a group of unqualified, unstable individuals who will do what they are told, in exchange for money and power, and march this nation as far backward as they can get, backward to Jim Crow, or backward to the breadlines of the '30s, or backward to hanging union organizers, or backward to the trusts and the robber barons....It is nothing short of an attempted use of democracy to end this democracy, to buy America wholesale and pave over the freedoms and the care we take of one another, which have combined to keep us the envy of the world.... If you sit there tomorrow, and the rest of this week, and you let this cataclysm unfold, you have enabled this. It is one thing to be attacked by those who would destroy America from without. It is a worse thing to be attacked by those who would destroy America from within.”

— MSNBC's Keith Olbermann in a 21-minute “Special Comment” on *Countdown*, October 27.



THE GROUND ZEROES AWARD FOR IMPUGNING AMERICANS AS ISLAMOPHOBIC

WINNER

Christiane Amanpour (71 points)

ABC's Christiane Amanpour: "So, Gary Bauer, as you know, a series of politicians have used the Islamic center [near Ground Zero], have used sort of Islamophobia and scare tactics in their campaigns....My question is do you take any — after some of the loaded things that have been said, and we can play you any number of tapes, Mr. Bauer — do you take any responsibility at all for, for instance, what happened in Murfreesboro [Tennessee, where a mosque was vandalized]?"

Former GOP presidential candidate Gary Bauer: "Are you serious? Absolutely not. I have never encouraged violence. I condemn violence."

Amanpour: "You don't think the rhetoric lays the groundwork for others?"

— Exchange during ABC's *This Week* October 3 townhall discussion on the question, "Should Americans Fear Islam?"



RUNNERS - UP

Keith Olbermann (53 points)

"Finally, tonight, as promised, a 'Special Comment' on the inaccurately described Ground Zero mosque. 'They came first for the communists and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a communist. Then they came for the trade unionists and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. And then they came for me and by that time, no one was left to speak up.' Pastor Martin Niemoller's words are well known....In quoting him, I make no direct comparison between the attempts to suppress the building of a Muslim religious center in downtown Manhattan and the unimaginable nightmare of the Holocaust. Such a comparison is ludicrous — at least, it is now."

— MSNBC's Keith Olbermann delivering a "Special Comment" on *Countdown*, August 16.



Bobby Ghosh (36 points)

"There is a lot of hate speech, and it's getting louder and more vicious....In these mosque protests, we've seen that hate speech take on a new and more venomous tinge....As somebody who I spoke to during the story told me, Islamophobia is now the accepted form of racism in this country."

— *Time's* Bobby Ghosh during the 1pm ET hour of CNN's *Newsroom*, August 19.



HAZING ARIZONA AWARD FOR DENIGRATING IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

WINNER

Linda Greenhouse (76 points)

“I’m glad I’ve already seen the Grand Canyon. Because I’m not going back to Arizona as long as it remains a police state....Everyone remembers the wartime Danish king who drove through Copenhagen wearing a Star of David in support of his Jewish subjects [during the Nazi occupation]. It’s an apocryphal story, actually, but an inspiring one. Let the good people of Arizona — and anyone passing through — walk the streets of Tucson and Phoenix wearing buttons that say: ‘I Could Be Illegal.’”

— *Ex-New York Times* Supreme Court reporter Linda Greenhouse in an April 27 op-ed.



RUNNERS - UP

Katie Couric (43 points)

Anchor Katie Couric: “Hundreds of thousands of them [illegal immigrants] now live in Arizona. But as Kelly Cobiella reports, many no longer feel welcome.”

Reporter Kelly Cobiella: “On a dusty block in Phoenix, 15 years of the Quintana family’s possessions are for sale. [to Manuela Quintana] When did you decide to leave? [translating] ‘When the governor signed the immigration law,’ Manuela Quintana says, ‘I knew we had to move.’...The family packed up before dawn today and headed north to Colorado. Manuela says she’s lost hope in this state. She thinks she’ll find it again in another.”

— *CBS Evening News*, May 3.



Diane Sawyer (41 points)

Anchor Diane Sawyer: “Tonight, undocumented immigrants — many working in this country for decades — are fleeing the state, or hiding in fear....”

Correspondent Bill Weir: “There is a fear-driven exodus going on in Arizona tonight. More vacant apartments, more empty shops, more kids disappearing from school.... Francisco has been in Phoenix without papers for 14 years, but says now he’s afraid to walk the streets. So he’ll take his family and leave as soon as he can.”

— *ABC’s World News*, July 27.



THE SUPREMELY SLANTED AWARD FOR ELEVATING ELENA KAGAN

WINNER

Nina Totenberg (49 points)

Legal correspondent Nina Totenberg: “In some ways, the descriptions of Elena Kagan as dean sound a little bit like the beginning of the old *Superman* TV series.”

Introduction to 1950s version of *Superman*: “Superman, who can change the course of mighty rivers! Bend steel in his bare hands!”

Totenberg: “Translate that to Harvard, and you can almost hear the music. [*Superman* theme music in background] Kagan, who can raise money by the millions! Kagan, who can end the faculty wars over hiring! Kagan, who won the hearts of students!”

— Report on NPR’s *Morning Edition*, May 18.



RUNNERS - UP

Terry Moran (63 points)

Anchor Diane Sawyer: “How was Justice Kagan on her first day?”

Correspondent Terry Moran: “Well, the one word that leapt to my mind was ‘ready.’ Within minutes of the start of these arguments in this bankruptcy case, she was jumping into the fray of oral arguments. She was confident and well prepared and fluent and probing. At one point, she asked a question of one of the lawyers that frankly seemed to stump them a little bit. A quiet kind of came over the courtroom as he gathered his thoughts. And you could almost sense or imagine some of the other justices and veteran court watchers kind of looking down the bench at Justice Kagan like a major league scout might say, ‘You know, that kid’s got some real pop on her fastball.’”

— ABC’s *World News*, October 4.



Margaret Carlson (40 points)

Host Al Hunt: “Margaret, if you were a Senator, would you vote for Elena Kagan?”

Bloomberg’s Margaret Carlson: “Um, twice if I could....She just excelled. It’s been so long since I’ve seen anyone in public life joyful about being there, and that was what was infectious about the hearings. When Lindsey Graham asked her about the Christmas Day bomber, he then switched with, ‘Where were you on Christmas?’ And she said, ‘Like all Jews, I was at a Chinese restaurant.’ She just said it right out. It brought the house down.”

— Bloomberg TV’s *Political Capital*, July 2.



THE HALF-BAKED ALASKA AWARD FOR PUMMELING PALIN

WINNER

Joe McGinniss (76 points)

“I think it’s probably a lesson for the American people of the power Palin has to incite hatred and her willingness and readiness to do it. She has pushed a button and unleashed the Hounds of Hell, and now that they’re out there slaving and barking and growling. And that’s the same kind of tactic — and I’m not calling her a Nazi — but that’s the same kind of tactic that the Nazi troopers used in Germany in the ’30s. And I don’t think there is any place for it in America.”

— Author Joe McGinniss talking about the reaction to his renting the house next door to Palin while he works on a book about the former Alaska governor, NBC’s *Today*, June 1.



RUNNERS-UP

Chris Matthews (55 points)

“If she were on *Jeopardy* right now and the topic was national government, American government generally defined, would she look like an imbecile, or would she look okay? Does she know anything?... Have you ever been an eyewitness to her actually reading something? Have you seen her — no, I’m dead serious about this. Have you ever seen her reading words on a piece of paper? A newspaper, magazine, anything? Have you ever seen her read something?”

— Chris Matthews to Alaska’s Democratic Senator Mark Begich during MSNBC’s election night coverage, November 2.



Chris Matthews (44 points)

“How does the neo-conservative right, the hawkish right, find such success in finding these empty vessels, like her? Like W.? Like, like Quayle? They find these empty vessels who know nothing about the world! Nothing about foreign policy! Who immediately begin to spout the neo-con line. I read her book — it’s full of that crap. Where, where do they find these people? They went on a cruise up there? What, [Bill] Kristol and Fred Barnes went on some cruise to Alaska and they found her standing at the docks with an empty head saying, ‘I’m willing to say what you want me to say.’”

— MSNBC’s Chris Matthews to Mark Halperin and John Heilemann, authors of the book *Game Change* about the 2008 presidential campaign, January 12 *Hardball*.



OBAMA'S ORDERLIES AWARD FOR PREPPING AMERICA FOR OBAMACARE

WINNER

Keith Olbermann (82 points)

“What would you do, sir, if terrorists were killing 45,000 people every year in this country? Well, the current health care system, the insurance companies, and those who support them are doing just that....Because they die individually of disease and not disaster, [radio host] Neal Boortz and those who ape him in office and out, approve their deaths, all 45,000 of them — a year — in America. Remind me again, who are the terrorists?”

—MSNBC's Keith Olbermann in a “Quick Comment” on *Countdown*, January 5.



RUNNERS-UP

Meredith Vieira (59 points)

“On a personal note, you said last night the first call you made after your victory was to Ted Kennedy’s widow, Vicki....How comfortable was that for both of you, knowing that you plan to do everything you can to derail what Ted Kennedy called, called ‘the cause of his lifetime,’ which is health care reform?”

—NBC's Meredith Vieira to Senator-elect Scott Brown on *Today*, January 20.



The New York Times (35 points)

“For Many, Health Care Relief Begins Today”

—*New York Times* headline over a series of articles about official launching of ObamaCare, September 23.

Katie Couric (23 points)

“I think providing health care for people who can’t afford it is something that most people do agree with — that there has to be some kind of alternative other than our national, our nation’s emergency rooms for people who need health care. And I read somewhere — I think it was in *The New Yorker* — that 45,000 people died needlessly because they simply don’t have access to health care, and that just seems so unfair and so undemocratic.”

—Katie Couric in a December 22, 2009 Facebook video chat. The statistic Couric cited was generated by the left-wing Physicians for a National Health Program.



THE CRUSH RUSH AWARD FOR LOATHING LIMBAUGH

WINNER

Keith Olbermann (67 points)

“What was the more likely cause of the Oklahoma City bombing: talk radio or Bill Clinton and Janet Reno’s hands-on management of Waco, the Branch Davidian compound?...Obviously, the answer is talk radio. Specifically, Rush Limbaugh’s hate radio....Frankly, Rush, you have that blood on your hands now and you have had it for 15 years.”

—MSNBC’s Keith Olbermann naming Rush Limbaugh the “Worst Person in the World,” April 19 *Countdown*.



RUNNERS-UP

Sarah Spitz (63 points)

“Laugh loudly like a maniac and watch his eyes bug out.”

—What producer Sarah Spitz of NPR affiliate KCRW said she would do if she saw Rush Limbaugh dying, in a posting to the *JournoList* reported July 21 by *The Daily Caller*. Spitz later conceded her comment was “poorly considered.”

Tina Brown (39 points)

“You started the year with this huge festival of hope and renewal and everything is going to be so different now, and then, like the bad fairy at Sleeping Beauty’s christening, Rush Limbaugh utters the words, ‘I hope you fail.’ ‘I hope he fails,’ he said, and from that moment, the sort of the Pandora’s box opened, and the rest of the year has been just this big discord and toxic atmosphere in politics and partisan divide and people shouting at each other and the Tea Parties and death panels.”

—*The Daily Beast*’s Tina Brown choosing the most important moment of the past year on NBC’s *Today* December 31, 2009.



David Shuster (33 points)

Anchor David Shuster: “Many conservatives today reacted harshly to the action in Congress. But nobody on the right produced as much controversial venom this afternoon as Rush Limbaugh....Limbaugh creates this picture of fascism and Nazism on the march. And you then start to have people going out of control acting crazily on Capitol Hill, yelling all kinds of racist things at members of the Congressional Black Caucus, yelling hateful things at Barney Frank....”

Georgetown University’s Michael Eric Dyson: “This is a bigotocracy. I think Rush Limbaugh is trying to foment a universe of bigotocracy.”

—Exchange during 3pm ET hour of *MSNBC Live*, March 22.

THE AUDACITY OF DOPES AWARD FOR THE WACKIEST ANALYSIS OF THE YEAR

WINNER

Charles Pierce (49 points)

“Well, we’re almost here, aren’t we? The end of a long, arduous, four-month campaign for a Senate seat that you have approximately the same chance of filling as you did the pilot’s chair of the Starship *Enterprise*.... The notion that Massachusetts would elect a Republican to fill the seat left vacant by Edward Kennedy was the property of people who buy interesting mushrooms in interesting places. You might as well expect the House of Windsor to be succeeded on the British throne by the Kardashian sisters.”

— *The Boston Globe Magazine*’s Charles Pierce in a January 10 column addressed to GOP Senate candidate Scott Brown.

RUNNERS-UP

Chris Matthews (46 points)

“You know, I was trying to think about who he was tonight, and it’s interesting: He is post-racial by all appearances. You know, I forgot he was black tonight for an hour.”

— MSNBC’s Chris Matthews during live coverage following the State of the Union address, January 27.



Paul Haven (44 points)

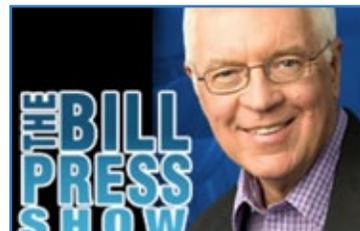
“Cuba’s communist leaders mapped out a brave new world of free enterprise on Friday, approving a laundry list of small-time businesses, allowing islanders to take on employees and even promising credit to burgeoning entrepreneurs. The reforms — laid out in a three-page spread in the Communist Party-daily *Granma* — seem sure to create a society of haves and have-nots in a land that has spent half a century striving for an egalitarian utopia.”

— Associated Press writer Paul Haven in a September 24 dispatch from Havana.

Bill Press (31 points)

“I call NPR ‘National Pentagon Radio.’ They’re no more left wing than Fox News as far as I’m concerned. Look at the commentators they have on there, right? They’re all right-wing commentators. I couldn’t get in the door of NPR. I’m sure you don’t appear on their shows either, right? They lean so far right. The idea that they’re part of the liberal media, as if they were. Look, except for MSNBC, these guys control all the media as far as I’m concerned.”

— Left-wing radio host and former CNN and MSNBC co-host Bill Press on Ed Schultz’s radio show, Oct. 22.



THE BARBRA STREISAND POLITICAL IQ AWARD FOR CELEBRITY VAPIDITY

WINNER

Rob Reiner (58 points)

“Hitler, by the way, never got more than 33 percent of the vote ever in Germany... He wasn’t a majority guy, but he was charismatic, and they were having bad economic times — just like we are now. People were out of work, they needed jobs, and a guy came along and rallied the troops. My fear is that the Tea Party gets a charismatic leader, because all they’re selling is fear and anger and that’s all Hitler sold: ‘I’m angry and I’m frightened and you should hate that guy over there.’”

— Actor/director/liberal activist Rob Reiner on HBO’s *Real Time with Bill Maher*, October 22.



RUNNERS-UP

Michael Moore (46 points)

“Chile had an earthquake this past week that was 500 times greater than the earthquake in Haiti. But here’s the big difference. In Chile, they have various — very serious regulations when it comes to building codes. So a thousand people died, sadly, but a thousand people died with a 500 times greater earthquake. And in Haiti, where there are no building codes, no regulations — a Republican’s paradise — a quarter of a million people died.”

— Left-wing filmmaker Michael Moore on HBO’s *Real Time with Bill Maher*, March 5.



Richard Dreyfuss (38 points)

Host Joy Behar: “Was it hard to play Dick Cheney?...Because I know that you’re not a fan of Cheney... Where did you find it in yourself to go down and find that satanic spot that we all know so well?”

Actor Richard Dreyfuss: “Are you leading me somewhere? First of all, every actor likes to play bad guys.... To play Dick Cheney, all I had to do was find my Dick Cheney. And you can find all the villainy in the world in your own heart, and that’s what an actor’s job is. I always say to kids, inside you is Hitler and Jesus. And you’ve got to find the appropriate person and bring them out.”

— Exchange on HLN’s *Joy Behar Show*, October 18.

Aaron Sorkin (29 points)

“Sarah Palin’s an idiot. Come on. This is a remarkably, stunningly, jaw-droppingly incompetent and mean woman.”

— TV and movie producer Aaron Sorkin on CNN’s *Parker Spitzer*, October 4.



QUOTE OF THE YEAR

MSNBC's Chris Matthews

Clip of Barack Obama from 2008: “My family gave me love. They gave me an education. And most of all, they gave me hope. Hope, hope that in America, no dream is beyond our grasp if we reach for it, and fight for it, and work for it.”

MSNBC's Chris Matthews: “I get the same thrill up my leg, all over me, every time I hear those words. I'm sorry, ladies and gentlemen, that's me. He's talking about my country and nobody does it better. Can President Obama stir us again and help his party keep power this November?”

— **Setting up a segment on MSNBC's *Hardball*, September 7.**



RUNNER-UP:

PBS's Tavis Smiley

Author Ayaan Hirsi Ali, talking about radical Muslims: “Somehow, the idea got into their minds that to kill other people is a great thing to do and that they would be rewarded in the hereafter.”

Host Tavis Smiley: “But Christians do that every single day in this country.”

Ali: “Do they blow people up every day?”

Smiley: “Yes. Oh, Christians, every day, people walk into post offices, they walk into schools, that's what Columbine is — I could do this all day long.... There are folk in the Tea Party, for example, every day who are being recently arrested for making threats against elected officials, for calling people ‘nigger’ as they walk into Capitol Hill, for spitting on people. That's within the political — that's within the body politic of this country.”

— **PBS's *Tavis Smiley*, May 25.**



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Notable Quotables

Publisher: L. Brent Bozell III
Editors: Brent H. Baker, Rich Noyes, Tim Graham
News Analysts: Geoff Dickens, Brad Wilmouth, Scott Whitlock, Matthew Balan, and Kyle Drennen
Research Associate: Michelle Humphrey
Interns: Matthew Hadro, Alex Fitzsimmons
Media Contact: Colleen O'Boyle

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MEDIA RESEARCH CENTER
325 SOUTH PATRICK STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314
703.683.9733 • 800.672.1423
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