MRC Dishonor Awards:
The Decade’s Most Outrageous Liberal Media Bias

On Thursday night, December 9, at the Monarch Hotel in Washington, D.C., the Media Research Center presented the “Dishonor Awards for the Decade’s Most Outrageous Liberal Bias.” Winners were picked by a distinguished panel of 13 leading media observers who served as judges — including Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, Robert Novak and Kate O’Beirne — all of whom selected first and second place choices from six to ten quotes in six award categories. See the back page for a list of the judges.

Stan Evans of the National Journalism Center emceed the dinner event. Serving as presenters of archival videos of the award nominees as originally seen on television during the past decade: Syndicated columnist Cal Thomas, radio talk show host Michael Reagan and National Review Publisher Ed Capano.

To watch via RealPlayer these quotes as they originally aired, plus excerpts of C-SPAN’s coverage of the awards banquet, go to: http://www.mrc.org and click on “Dishonor Awards.” Or, go directly to: http://www.mediaresearch.org/news/nq/dishonors.html.

The next pages list the top runners-up in each award category as picked by the judges, followed by the winner and the name of the conservative who accepted the award in jest.
How Do I Hate the Gipper? Let Me Count the Ways Award  
Presented by Michael Reagan

Runners-up:  
“You place the responsibility for the death of your daughter squarely at the feet of the Reagan Administration. Do you believe they’re responsible for that?”  
— NBC’s Maria Shriver to AIDS sufferer Elizabeth Glaser, July 14, 1992 Democratic convention coverage.

“The boom years following World War II saw the U.S. economy take off, giving rise to the growth of the great American middle class. The rising standard of living meant homes, cars, TVs, college for the kids — all in all, a piece of the American dream. But in the Reagan years, economic erosion set in, so much so that the middle class now finds itself in ever-deepening trouble.”  

And the winner is…

“In the plague years of the 1980s — that low decade of denial, indifference, hostility, opportunism, and idiocy — government fiddled, and medicine diddled, and the media were silent or hysterical. A gerontocratic Ronald Reagan took this [AIDS] plague less seriously than Gerald Ford had taken swine flu. After all, he didn’t need the ghettos and he didn’t want the gays.”  

Accepting for John Leonard…  
Reagan Attorney General Ed Meese

Presented by Michael Reagan

Politics of Meaninglessness Award for the Wackest Analysis

Runners-up:  
“It’s a morbid observation, but if everyone on earth just stopped breathing for an hour, the greenhouse effect would no longer be a problem.”  
— Newsweek Senior Writer Jerry Adler, December 31, 1990 issue.

“It’s short of soap, so there are lice in the hospitals. It’s short of pantyhose, so women’s legs go bare. It’s short of snowsuits, so babies stay home in the winter. Sometimes it’s short of cigarettes so millions of people stop smoking, involuntarily. It drives everybody crazy. The problem isn’t communism; nobody even talked about communism this week. The problem is shortages.”  

And the winner is…

“He [Ted Kaczynski] wasn’t a hypocrite. He lived as he wrote. His manifesto, and there are a lot of things in it that I would agree with and a lot of other people would, that industrialization and pollution all are terrible things, but he carried it to an extreme, and obviously murder is something that is far beyond any political philosophy, but he had a bike. He didn’t have any plumbing, he didn’t have any electricity.”  

Accepting for Elaine Shannon…  
Long-time Reagan aide Lyn Nofziger

Presidential Kneepad Award for the Best Journalistic Lewinsky  
Presented by Cal Thomas

Runners-up:  
“Mr. President, we love you. I want to hug you, I want to hug you, please do the right thing. This is nothing, this is nothing. Thomas Jefferson did not have this in mind, I swear to God… I would give Ken Starr the Nobel Peace Prize were he to be man enough not to refer a sex lie to the House for impeachment. We’ll be right back, stay tuned folks.”  
— Geraldo Rivera urging Clinton not to cooperate, August 6, 1998 edition of Rivera Live on CNBC.

“If we could be one-hundredth as great as you and Hillary Rodham Clinton have been in the White House, we’d take it right now and walk away winners…Thank you very much and tell Mrs. Clinton we respect her and we’re pulling for her.”  
— Dan Rather at a May 27, 1993 CBS affiliates meeting talking via satellite to President Clinton about his new on-air partnership with Connie Chung as co-anchor of the CBS Evening News.

And the winner is…

“I would be happy to give him [Clinton] a blow job just to thank him for keeping abortion legal. I think American women should be lining up with their presidential kneepads on to show their gratitude for keeping the theocracy off our backs.”  
— Time contributor and former reporter Nina Burleigh recalling what she told the Washington Post’s Howard Kurtz about her feeling toward Bill Clinton, as recounted by Burleigh in the July 20, 1998 New York Observer.

Accepting for Nina Burleigh…  
Wall Street Journal editorial writer John Fund
screaming....Imagine a nation full of uncontrolled two-

— Peter Jennings in his radio commentary after the GOP won the House, November 14, 1994.

**And the winner is....**

“The bombing in Oklahoma City has focused renewed attention on the rhetoric that’s been coming from the right and those who cater to angry white men. While no one’s suggesting that right-wing radio jocks approve of violence, the extent to which their approach fosters violence is being questioned by many observers, including the President of the United States....The list of those the President may have had in mind is at once long and familiar. Right-wing talk show hosts like Rush Limbaugh, Bob Grant, Oliver North, G. Gordon Liddy, Michael Reagan, and others take to the air every day with basically the same format: detail a problem, blame the government or a group, and invite invective from like-minded people....Never do most of the radio hosts encourage outright violence, but the extent to which their attitudes may embolden or encourage some extremists has clearly become an issue.”

— Today co-host Bryant Gumbel, April 25, 1995.

Accepting for Bryant Gumbel.... Syndicated radio talk show host Ollie North

**I’m a Compassionate Liberal But I Wish You Were All Dead Award (for Media Hatred of Conservatives)**

**Presented by Ed Capano**

**Runners-up:**

“Can Ken Starr ignore the apparent breadth of the sympathetic response to the President’s speech? Facialy, it finally dawned on me that the person Ken Starr has reminded me of facially all this time was Heinrich Himmler, including the glasses. If he now pursues the President of the United States, who, however flawed his apology was, came out and invoked God, family, his daughter, a political conspiracy and everything but the kitchen sink, would not there be some sort of comparison to a persecutor as opposed to a prosecutor for Mr. Starr?”


**Inside Washington** host Tina Gulland: “I don’t think I have any Jesse Helms defenders here. Nina?”

**Nina Totenberg:** “Not me, I think he ought to be worried about what’s going on in the Good Lord’s mind, because if there is retributive justice, he’ll get AIDS from a transfusion, or one of his grandchildren will get it.”

— NPR and ABC News reporter Nina Totenberg reacting to Senator Jesse Helms’ claim the government spends too much on AIDS research, July 8, 1995 Inside Washington.
And the winner is....

“The man is on the Court. You know, I hope his wife feeds him lots of eggs and butter and he dies early like many black men do, of heart disease. Well, that’s how I feel. He is an absolutely reprehensible person.”
— USA Today columnist and Pacifica Radio talk show host Julianne Malveaux on Justice Clarence Thomas, November 4, 1994 PBS To the Contrary.

Accepting for Julianne Malveaux....
Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas

Quotes of the Decade

The MRC employed audience participation to determine the Quote of the Decade selected from amongst the quotes which had already won an award. To qualify the quote had to be uttered by a reporter, so that eliminated the winning quotes from John Leonard and Julianne Malveaux.

Following the presentation of the six award categories, the audience again saw the four winning quotes from reporters: Elaine Shannon on the Unabomber, Nina Burleigh on Bill Clinton, Evan Thomas on Paula Jones and Bryant Gumbel on talk radio. Then, as a picture of each was displayed, audience members were asked by MRC Chairman L. Brent Bozell to clap, cheer and make noise to indicate which one they thought should win.

Emcee Stan Evans served as the judge and he called it a tie between Burleigh and Gumbel:

“I would be happy to give him [Clinton] a blow job just to thank him for keeping abortion legal. I think American women should be lining up with their presidential knee-pads on to show their gratitude for keeping the theocracy off our backs.”
— Time contributor and former reporter Nina Burleigh recalling what she told the Washington Post’s Howard Kurtz about her feeling toward Bill Clinton, as recounted by Burleigh in the July 20, 1998 New York Observer.

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suggesting that right-wing radio jocks approve of violence, the extent to which their approach fosters violence is being questioned by many observers, including the President of the United States....The list of those the President may have had in mind is at once long and familiar. Right-wing talk show hosts like Rush Limbaugh, Bob Grant, Oliver North, G. Gordon Liddy, Michael Reagan, and others take to the air every day with basically the same format: detail a problem, blame the government or a group, and invite invective from like-minded people....Never do most of the radio hosts encourage outright violence, but the extent to which their attitudes may embolden or encourage some extremists has clearly become an issue.”
— NBC’s Today co-host Bryant Gumbel, April 25, 1995.

The Judges:

To select the quotes, a distinguished panel of 13 leading observers of the liberal media in action generously gave of their time to serve as our judges. They reviewed a half dozen to ten quotes in each of six award categories.

For each set of quotes from the 1990s the judges picked a first place and a second place choice. First place selections earned two points and one point was assigned to second place picks.

William F. Buckley Jr., syndicated columnist and National Review Editor-at-Large
John Fund, Wall Street Journal editorial page writer
Sean Hannity, co-host of FNC’s Hannity & Colmes; radio talk show at WABC Radio
Rush Limbaugh, national radio talk show host
Marlin Maddoux, USA Radio Network talk show host
Mary Matalin, co-host of CNN’s Crossfire
Oliver North, nationally syndicated radio talk show host
Robert Novak, syndicated columnist and CNN commentator
Kate O’Beirne, Washington Editor of National Review and panelist on CNN’s Capital Gang
Michael Reagan, nationally syndicated radio talk show host
William Rusher, Distinguished Fellow at the Claremont Institute and syndicated columnist
Cal Thomas, nationally syndicated columnist
R. Emmett Tyrrell Jr., Editor-in-Chief of The American Spectator

Watch video clips of these quotes of the decade as well as highlights of the award presentations and acceptances: www.mediaresearch.org

Notable Quotables

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