



# Worst of the Week

The Most Egregious, Horrendous and Stupefying Liberal Media Bias of Campaign '08

## THE TRASHING OF SARAH PALIN

Five days after Alaska Governor Sarah Palin was picked as the Republican vice presidential nominee, NBC's David Gregory falsely disputed the idea that the media had crossed a line by suggesting Palin's family life conflicted with her candidacy. Referring to an earlier interview, Gregory argued on Today: "Rudy Giuliani said questions have been asked about whether she can balance this with her kids. That question has not been brought up by the media."

Gregory was wrong — that precise question was posed repeatedly on ABC, CBS and NBC as the networks invaded every nook and cranny of Palin's family life. From August 29 through September 4, the Big Three network morning and evening shows ran a total of 59 stories mentioning Palin's family, or about eight per day. Nearly two-thirds of those (37) brought up the pregnancy of Palin's teenaged daughter; another ten questioned whether she could balance her family obligations with a campaign — the exact suggestion Gregory claimed was never "brought up by the media."

On Wednesday's Today, NBC's Amy Robach wondered of Palin: "Will she be shortchanging her kids, or will she be shortchanging the country?" During a roundtable discussion on CBS, the Washington Post's Sally Quinn scolded that "a woman with five children, including one with special needs, and a daughter who is a 17-year-old child who is pregnant and about to have a baby, probably has got to rethink her priorities." The previous Saturday, ABC weekend Good Morning America co-host Bill Weir referenced the "brutality of a national campaign" as he indignantly challenged a McCain spokesman: "She has an infant with special needs. Will that affect her campaigning?"

There was no holding back when it came to exploiting Palin's 17-year-old pregnant daughter; ABC's Diane Sawyer suggested the pregnancy should cast doubt on Palin's stance favoring "abstinence-only education." But after days of such coverage, journalists such as Time's Joe Klein pompously suggested that complaints from Republicans were nothing but an "insidious" attempt "to bully us into not reporting" unflattering facts about Palin's public life.

That shows an utter blindness to the real problem: a press corps so overtaken by partisanship that they will stoop to using a candidate's young family as ammo against her. Pollster Scott Rasmussen documented the backlash: "Over half of U.S. voters (51%) think reporters are trying to hurt Sarah Palin... and 24% say those stories make them more likely to vote" for the GOP.

