

Notable Quotables

April 25, 2005 (Vol. Eighteen; No. 9)

A bi-weekly compilation of the latest outrageous, sometimes humorous, quotes in the liberal media.



Bringing Political
Balance to the Media

Distressed by "Rottweiler" Pope

"He has taken the name of a healer, but where will this archconservative lead the Catholic Church?"

— **Mark Phillips on the April 19 CBS Evening News, teasing his report on the election of Pope Benedict XVI.**

"In choosing Joseph Ratzinger, the cardinals picked the most polarizing figure in the Catholic Church. No one was more respected as a student of theology, but no one was more feared as a chief enforcer of Vatican orthodoxy....It was Joseph Ratzinger's job as head of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith — the old office of the Inquisition — that led to him being labeled by some as 'God's Rottweiler.' He attacked dissent, banishing it from the Church's mainstream, sometimes banishing it from the Church altogether....On the hot button issues — contraception, celibacy, women priests — he would not budge....The new Pope Benedict has described homosexuality as a moral evil. He said the sex abuse scandal in the Church has been exaggerated by the media, and in the last U.S. election he said pro-choice candidates on the abortion question should be denied communion — in other words, denied salvation. As a cardinal, Joseph Ratzinger took no prisoners. As the Pope, his policies now have the stamp of infallibility."

— **Phillips a few minutes later on the same broadcast.**

"The man who was seen as far too controversial to head up the Church is now the leader of the world's one billion Catholics. In the Sistine Chapel, the ornate hall where just hours earlier he was elected Pope, Benedict XVI celebrated his first mass....Many Catholics, though, found nothing to celebrate. His election would appear to dash reformers' hopes that the Vatican would strike out in a new direction after the conservative reign of John Paul II."

— **CBS's John Roberts on the April 20 Early Show.**

"Well, it's hard for me to believe that there wasn't at least some controversy in the decision of Cardinal Ratzinger. It's amazing to me....I think that you can expect a pontificate that is going to be very hard-line indeed on doctrinal issues. He is, for instance, very much opposed to any kind of outreach to homosexuals who are practicing homosexuals. He's very much opposed to gay marriage. One of the things, he's sort of known as 'Cardinal No' for some of his positions that he's taken, very hard-line positions."

— **CNN's Jim Bittermann during live coverage about 12:47pm EDT, April 19.**

Heading Back to the Dark Ages

"There's widespread doubt here that he will be able to overcome his reputation as the intimidating enforcer, punishing liberal thinkers and keeping the Church in the Middle Ages."

— **ABC News producer Christel Kucharz reporting on German reaction to Cardinal Ratzinger's election during live coverage on April 19.**

"This is an extremely controversial choice. This is a choice of the person who is seen by the world as the most conservative voice of Catholicism, and whether his papacy gives the lie to that or not, we have no way of knowing. But he has been responsible for removing theologians from their positions in American institutions."

— **Cokie Roberts during ABC's live coverage, April 19.**

Obviously Too Conservative to Win

"German-born Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger is also mentioned, but his extreme conservative views and his age might be his undoing when votes are cast in the Sistine Chapel."

— **ABC's Charles Gibson on Good Morning America, April 4.**

"German Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger still appears the front-runner, but the ultraconservative Ratzinger, part of John Paul's inner circle, may be hurt by news reports that, as a teenager, he was briefly a member of Hitler's youth group in Nazi Germany. Some Vatican watchers say they already see proof here of another old rule: whoever enters the conclave as the next Pope comes out a cardinal."

— **NBC's Jim Maceda on the April 17 Nightly News.**

John Paul an Extremist, Too

NBC's Bob Faw: "Embraced by multitudes....John Paul also alienated others. Lifelong Catholic Serra Sippel was so angered by his teachings she quit going to mass....She's outraged even now the Vatican didn't do more to stop sexual abuse by priests. Outraged, too, because the late Pope refused to ordain or even consider ordaining women...."

Rea Howarth, Catholics Speak Out: "This Pope didn't care to learn from the likes of women."

Faw: "Her left-of-center Catholic group also complains that John Paul, rather than affirming life, actually affirmed death when he refused to permit the use of condoms to fight the spread of AIDS."

Howarth: "That teaching is death dealing."

— **NBC Nightly News, April 6.**

The Media Research Center's 2005 DisHonors Awards

The Media Research Center presented its annual "DisHonors Awards" for the most outrageously biased liberal reporting of 2004 at the J.W. Marriott hotel in Washington, D.C. on April 21, 2005. Cal Thomas served as the evening's Master of Ceremonies; Sean Hannity, Ann Coulter and Neal Boortz presented the awards. The winners were chosen by a panel of 16 distinguished media observers listed below. In place of the journalist who "won" each award, a conservative accepted it in jest. Following the awards ceremony, MRC President Brent Bozell presented the "Conservative of the Year" award to the Swift Vets and POWs for Truth for their courageous role in the 2004 presidential campaign.

Really Time to Retire Award

✓ "I have a feeling that it [a videotaped message from Osama bin Laden] could tilt the election a bit. In fact, I'm a little inclined to think that Karl Rove, the political manager at the White House, who is a very clever man, that he probably set up bin Laden to this thing."

— Former *CBS Evening News* anchor **Walter Cronkite** on *CNN's Larry King Live*, October 29.

Accepting for Walter Cronkite...Colin McNickle

Runners-Up:

■ **CBS's Morley Safer:** "You talk about a vision, and it's some kind of abstract, vague idea. Did his [Ronald Reagan's] vision include extraordinary deficits? Did his vision include cutting of the budgets for education and a back of the hand in terms of public education?"

King: "History will not be kind to him?"

Safer: "No, I don't think history particularly will be kind."

King: "You don't?"

Safer: "They'll talk about all that superficial stuff that all of you have been talking about. But when it gets down to the real substance, I don't think history has any reason to be kind to him."

— *CNN's Larry King Live*, during a June 14 discussion of the late President Ronald Reagan's legacy.

■ "Today, on the Internet and elsewhere, some people, including many who are partisan political operatives, concentrated not on the key questions of the overall story, but on the documents that were part of the support of the story. They allege that the documents are fake....The *60 Minutes* report was based not solely on the recovered documents, but on a preponderance of the evidence, including documents that were provided by what we consider to be solid sources and interviews with former officials of the Texas National Guard. If any definitive evidence to the contrary of our story is found, we will report it. So far, there is none."

— **Dan Rather** on the September 10 *CBS Evening News*.

Send Bush to Abu Ghraib Award

✓ **Bill Moyers:** "There have been 37,000 civilians killed in Iraq, or as many perhaps as 100,000. Why is abortion a higher moral issue with many American Christians than the invasion of Iraq and the loss of life there?"

Sister Joan Chittister: "Could I ask you that question? Because that is the moral question that brings me closest to tears. I do not understand that, Bill. You see, I'm absolutely certain that some of the people that we're killing

over there are pregnant women. Now what do you do?

Now what do you do? That's military abortion."

• **Moyers:** "Somebody said to me — that's what?"

• **Chittister:** "That's military abortion. Why is that morally acceptable?"

• **Moyers:** "Somebody said to me that Americans don't behead, but we do drop smart bombs that do it for us."

• — November 12 exchange on *PBS's Now*.

Accepting for Bill Moyers...T. Boone Pickens

Runners-Up:

• ■ "The President's team knows that it can't get back to the White House by taking only hard right turns, so it has, as three of its featured speakers, Republicans who have been successful by navigating the middle of the road as well as the right-hand side: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger of California; Rudy Giuliani, New York's former Mayor; and Senator John McCain, who often calls himself John Kerry's best friend in the U.S. Senate. Streetwise New Yorkers may call that the political equivalent of a popular con game in this tough town — three-card monte. But then, that's also a game in which the dealer almost always wins."

• — **Tom Brokaw** on the August 29 *NBC Nightly News*, the eve of the Republican convention.

• ■ "To move to the 9/11 Commission, you yourself have acknowledged in the, that Osama bin Laden was not a central focus of the administration in the months before September 11th....Two-and-a-half years later, do you feel any sense of personal responsibility for September 11th?"

• — *New York Times* reporter **Elisabeth Bumiller** to President Bush at an April 13 news conference.

Al Franken Award (for the Stupidest Analysis)

• ✓ "Veterans haven't been a big force in past campaigns... but the Vietnam vets may feel bound together more strongly....It may be too early to know how influential they'll be in Kerry's campaign, but they have already done one thing: If the Republicans had any hope of casting Kerry as some Michael Dukakis-style effete Eastern liberal, that's over. The band of brothers stands in its way."

• — *CNN's Bruce Morton* on *Inside Politics*, January 30.

Accepting for Bruce Morton...Janet Parshall

Runners-Up:

• ■ **Matt Lauer:** "Let me talk about this idea that a rag-tag group — not well-fed, not well-clothed, completely under-equipped as compared to this great British army and the Hessians — could accomplish this. And let me ask you to

think about what is going on in Iraq today, where the insurgents — not well equipped, smaller in numbers — the greatest army in the world is their opposition. What's the lesson here?"

Lynne Cheney: "Well, the difference, of course, is who's fighting on the side of freedom."

— Exchange on the November 9 *Today* show, where Mrs. Cheney was promoting her book on George Washington's crossing of the Delaware River.

■ "Tonight, savagery in the streets of Iraq. Ten Americans die in a single day, four of them civilians murdered, mutilated and dragged through the streets....What drives American civilians to risk death in Iraq? In this economy, it may be, for some, the only job they can find."

— Dan Rather teasing a report on the *CBS Evening News* on March 31, the day four American civilians were killed and mutilated in Fallujah, Iraq.

The "I'm Not a Political Genius But I Play One on TV" Award

✓ **Joe Scarborough:** "Since George Bush got into public life, he's been underestimated by his opponents....Is that a part of an act that this guy does to lull Democrats into underestimating him, or do Democrats just put up really, really bad candidates against this guy every four years?"

Comic/liberal radio host Janeane Garofalo: "Well, I don't recognize that as a valid question. First of all, George W. Bush is a bad candidate. George W. Bush is unelectable, in my opinion. And secondly—"

Scarborough: "Well, why does he keep winning?"

Garofalo: "I don't know, voter fraud? A failed mainstream media that fails to inform the electorate about what their government is doing? Ignorance? Apathy? I don't know."

— MSNBC's *Scarborough Country*, January 20, 2005, just hours after Bush's second inauguration.

Accepting for Janeane Garofalo...Midge Decter

Runners-Up:

■ "We must make it clear that a hundred million women in this country will not have their rights rolled back by political extremists! The far right have already squandered your Social Security! They better put our uterus in a lockbox and keep their hands off them!"

— Actress Camryn Manheim, who played "Ellenor Frutt" on ABC's *The Practice*, screaming at the April 25 pro-abortion "March for Women's Lives" rally on the Mall in Washington, D.C. and shown live on C-SPAN.

■ **Cynthia McFadden:** "There's the last image of the video where President Bush, or a President Bush look-alike, kisses Saddam Hussein—"

Madonna: "On the cheek."

McFadden: "On the cheek. What are we supposed to think about that?"

Madonna: "Although, you know, they are very different people serving very different purposes. I think they both have very equally narrow views about how to solve problems, and it is all about power, the struggle for oil and the struggle for world domination, and at the end of the day,

are they that different? You know what I mean? I don't want to equate George Bush with Saddam Hussein. But I believe that George Bush and Saddam Hussein are both behaving in an irresponsible manner, so in that respect, they're alike."

— Interview shown on ABC's *20/20*, June 18.

John Kerry Suck-Up Award

✓ "It was four years ago during the Democratic convention, not far from where we stand tonight, that John Kerry stood near his father on his deathbed. Earlier, as the family was preparing to leave John Kerry's home in Boston, I'm told he whispered to his sister, 'Remember the words of our mother on her deathbed when she said, 'John,' knowing he would run for President some day, 'remember, John, integrity, that's what matters.' Tonight, John Kerry tried to show that integrity."

— CBS's Byron Pitts during live coverage after Kerry's speech to the Democratic convention, July 29.

Accepting for Byron Pitts...Senator Zell Miller

Runners-Up:

■ **Dan Rather:** "Speaking of angry, have you ever had any anger about President Bush — who spent his time during the Vietnam War in the National Guard — running, in effect, a campaign that does its best to diminish your service in Vietnam? You have to be at least irritated by that, or have you been?"

Senator John Kerry: "Yup, I have been."

— Interview shown on the July 22 *CBS Evening News*.

■ "For Massachusetts Senator John Kerry, tonight's acceptance of the Democratic nomination is more than merely a day, it's his destiny....The day before his speech, Kerry crossed Boston Harbor with some of his crew mates from Vietnam, his band of brothers. They have one battle left. But tonight the loner will stand alone here in his hometown one more time and look to do what John F. Kerry has nearly always done — find a way to win."

— Byron Pitts on CBS's *The Early Show*, July 29.

The Judges:

• **Neal Boortz**, Atlanta-based national radio talk show host
• **L. Brent Bozell III**, President of the Media Research Center
• **William F. Buckley, Jr.**, Founder of *National Review*
• **Ann Coulter**, columnist, author of *How to Talk to a Liberal*
• **John Fund**, columnist for OpinionJournal.com
• **Lucianne Goldberg**, publisher of Lucianne.com
• **Sean Hannity**, co-host of FNC's *Hannity & Colmes*
• **Laura Ingraham**, nationally-syndicated radio talk show host
• **Rush Limbaugh**, host of *The Rush Limbaugh Show*
• **Michelle Malkin**, author and editor of MichelleMalkin.com
• **Robert Novak**, CNN host, *Chicago Sun-Times* columnist
• **Kate O'Beirne**, *National Review* and CNN's *Capital Gang*
• **William Rusher**, Distinguished Fellow, Claremont Institute
• **Cal Thomas**, columnist and host of FNC's *After Hours*
• **Walter E. Williams**, George Mason University professor
• **Thomas S. Winter**, Editor-in-Chief of *Human Events*

NBC Mourns Jimmy's Absence

"As President Bush travels to Rome this morning along with the First Lady, Condoleezza Rice and former Presidents Bush and Clinton, the question some people are asking is where's President Carter in all this? Are the Bushes and the Carters the modern day version of the Hatfields and the McCoys?"

— **Katie Couric opening the April 6 Today.**

"The arrival here tonight of three U.S. presidents has some asking why Jimmy Carter isn't a part of the official American delegation."

— **Anchor Brian Williams in Rome for the April 6 NBC Nightly News.**

"Were you surprised, Archbishop Foley, that President Carter was not a part of the delegation given the fact that the Pope visited President Carter at the White House?"

— **Couric questioning a Vatican official on Today, April 7.**

"You have to wonder why the White House couldn't have asked the Vatican to permit one more person in the Basilica? Particularly a Nobel Laureate who actually worked on Third World issues with John Paul II."

— **Reporter Andrea Mitchell on NBC's Today, April 6.**

"The faithful descend upon Saint Peter's. Crowds crying and choreographed security. President Bush is there; Jimmy Carter is not. Was the ex-President snubbed by the White House?...Is this a big presidential diss?"

— **MSNBC's Alison Stewart filling in as anchor of Countdown with Keith Olbermann, April 6.**

TV's Faulty Gas Prices Hype

"Gas prices have hit a record for a third week in a row, now averaging \$2.22 a gallon for regular according to the government."

— **NBC's Ann Curry on the April 5 Today. In fact, adjusted for inflation, gasoline prices would have to climb to \$2.97 per gallon to surpass the record high set in 1981.**

"World oil prices rose again today, and gasoline hit yet another record high, up six cents in the past week, to a nationwide average \$2.28 a gallon. That's about half a dollar more than we were paying a year ago."

— **Bob Schieffer on the April 11 CBS Evening News.**

"Gas prices have reached another record high. The average retail price for all three grades has risen nearly 19 cents a gallon in just three weeks."

— **Co-host Harry Smith on CBS's Early Show, April 11.**

Keith's Screwy "Minority" Report

"Two of the nation's top Republicans are being catty about House Minority Leader Tom DeLay, saying that the man who made his fortune as an exterminator has strayed too far from ethical conduct....Minority Leader DeLay, criticized both by his fellow archconservative, Senator Rick Santorum of Pennsylvania, and the much more moderate Republican, Congressman Chris Shays....Shays says he thinks DeLay should resign as Minority Leader, but he adds he is not calling for him to do so."

— **MSNBC's Keith Olbermann on Countdown, April 11. DeLay is actually the House Majority Leader.**

Bob Was Not Amused

Bob Schieffer: "Last night, speaking to the National Rifle Association, Congressman DeLay said, and I'm quoting here an Associated Press account: 'When a man is in trouble or is in a good fight, you want to have your friends around, preferably armed. So I feel good.' What is your reaction to that, Congressman?"

Rep. David Dreier (R-CA): "Well, my reaction is, first of all, Tom DeLay, like most of the rest of us, are supporters of the Second Amendment to the Bill of Rights and believe in the right to keep and bear arms. But I will tell you that, let me just tell you the—"

Schieffer, interrupting: "Well, don't you find that rather inflammatory?"

— **Exchange on CBS's Face the Nation, April 17.**

Suddenly Sage Gingrich

"House Republican Leader Tom DeLay, who's been under fire on ethical questions...got some criticism today from a new quarter — former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, who engineered the Republican takeover of Congress in 1994. In an exclusive interview with our Gloria Borger, Gingrich said it's time for DeLay to stop blaming a left-wing conspiracy and to lay out his case."

— **Bob Schieffer on the April 12 CBS Evening News.**

"I Don't Know About God"

"Leading a parade of celebrity witnesses who claimed they were stiffed by a speakers bureau, Andy Rooney began his testimony Monday by questioning the wording of the oath to tell the truth....Rooney, 86, entered the courtroom muttering, and he balked when asked to swear to tell 'nothing but the truth, so help you God.'"

"'I don't know about God,' he said."

— **From an April 11 AP dispatch by Jim Fitzgerald about the fraud trial of Alan Walker, who allegedly stole speaking fees from a number of celebrities, including Rooney.**

Notable Quotables

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