

Notable Quotables



Bringing Political
Balance to the Media

August 30, 2004 (Vol. Seventeen; No. 18)

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

Already Sick of the Swifties

"What I've heard from colleagues is that people feel it probably has had too long a life....We wish someone would put a stake in this vampire."

— *Chicago Tribune* reporter Frank James discussing the *Swift Boat Veterans for Truth* charges that John Kerry embellished his Vietnam War record, as quoted in an *Aug. 24 Editor & Publisher* Web-posted story, "Campaign Journalists: Has Swift Boat Story Gone on Too Long?"

Doubt Kerry? How Childish!

"Isn't this the kind of thing that turns so many Americans off to politics? I call it a kind of kindergarten politics: 'You did this in Vietnam!' 'No, I didn't!' But it really doesn't get to the issue of what I think most Americans care about and that is which candidate is more likely to keep America safe?"

— Substitute anchor Daryn Kagan to media expert Kathleen Hall Jamieson, the director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania, on CNN's *NewsNight with Aaron Brown*, August 19.

He's Still a Hero to Aaron

"What are the facts here? Not necessarily the whole gospel truth — given that memories fade and records don't tell an entire story — but the facts as best we know them, and nothing more. Here are a few facts that seem to matter most. The available official record is unambiguous: John Kerry was a war hero. The citation that accompanies his Bronze Star speaks of his, quote, 'professionalism, great personal courage under fire, complete dedication to duty.' If you go by some of the witnesses to those events, like the young Special Forces soldier Kerry pulled from the river, there is no argument."

— CNN's Aaron Brown on the August 23 *NewsNight*.

Let's Help Kerry Connect the Dots

"Here we are, another day we're talking about the same thing that's been dominating headlines of late. The Kerry camp has repeatedly called on President Bush and the White House to denounce these ads, to come out strongly against them, something they, so far, have been unwilling to do. And then over the weekend, we just said, that this Bush advisor, whose job it was to reach out to veterans, resigns over his role in this new ad. Is this the proof that what the Kerry camp has been saying all along is out there, that these two are connected?"

— CBS's Rene Sylver to *Congressional Quarterly* columnist Craig Crawford on *The Early Show*, August 23.

Insisting Bush Condemn Nasty Ad

"The President praises Kerry's Vietnam service, but refuses to condemn the ad."

— Tom Brokaw on *NBC Nightly News*, August 23.

"President Bush today condemned the ads, but he only condemned the way such ads are financed, paid for by independent groups. He avoids condemning the specific content of the ads, and that infuriates Democrats."

— ABC's Charles Gibson at the top of the August 23 *World News Tonight*.

"Yesterday, the President said, quote, 'I think Senator Kerry served admirably and he ought to be proud of his record.' If he really believes that, why won't he come out specifically and denounce these ads?"

— Anderson Cooper to RNC Chairman Ed Gillespie on CNN's *American Morning*, August 24.

"Every time somebody asks an official, from President Bush right on down, they give this very carefully crafted answer. They say, 'We condemn all these ads,' but they will not condemn this ad specifically. Why is that?"

— CBS's Bob Schieffer to Republican Senator Pat Roberts on the August 22 *Face the Nation*.

"Even Republican Senator John McCain has called on the President to condemn this ad. Why hasn't he done so, this swift boat ad?"

— ABC's Elizabeth Vargas to reporter Terry Moran on *World News Tonight*, August 19, the first night the broadcast mentioned the *Swift Boat Veterans for Truth*.

"Do you think that these attacks of this nature are unpatriotic, un-American, seeing as we're sending young people to war at this time?"

"But why won't you denounce the charges that your supporters are making against Kerry?"

"You've been accused of mounting a smear campaign. Do you think Senator Kerry lied about his war record?"

— Some of the questions from unidentified journalists to President Bush during an exchange with reporters outside his Crawford, Texas ranch, August 23.

Empathy for Victimized Kerrys

"All of us wonder what is it like to be out there when you hear these attacks on your dad? How do you handle that?"

— CBS's Bob Schieffer to John Kerry's daughters, Alexandra and Vanessa, on the August 22 *Face the Nation*.

Media Wrap Liberal Gift for Kerry

“CBO Report: Bush Tax Cuts Tilted to Rich.”

— **Headline over an August 13 Reuters dispatch.**

“Report Finds Tax Cuts Heavily Favor the Wealthy.”

— **Headline in the August 13 *New York Times*.**

“Budget Office Says Biggest Tax Cuts Go to Richest 1%.”

— **Headline over *Wall Street Journal* news story, Aug. 13.**

“Tax Burden Shifts to the Middle.”

— ***Washington Post* headline, August 13.**

“John Kerry’s campaign still believes, ‘It’s the economy, stupid,’ and today’s report that the richest one percent of Americans received a third of President Bush’s tax cut, in their view, came practically gift-wrapped.”

— **Carl Quintanilla on the August 13 *NBC Nightly News*.**

vs.

Anchor Jim Angle: “After long accusing President Bush of favoring the rich at the expense of the middle class, Democrats now say they have the headlines to prove it. But those headlines don’t tell the whole story about taxes, the wealthy, or the middle class.”

Reporter Major Garrett: “The report fails to show that the Bush tax cuts removed 14 million poor taxpayers from the income tax rolls entirely. But it does show that the Bush tax cuts mean that on a percentage basis, the wealthiest households now pay a larger share of federal income taxes under Bush than they did under Clinton.”

— **FNC’s *Special Report with Brit Hume*, August 13.**

Another Liberal Milestone

“Good evening. Another boundary of American politics has been crossed today. In New Jersey, the Governor, James McGreevey, made a stunning admission on national television. With his wife by his side, the Governor announced that he is gay, that he had an affair with a man and that he would resign. His announcement makes him the highest-ranking American politician to identify himself as gay.”

— **Elizabeth Vargas on *World News Tonight*, August 12.**

“We wonder in this day and age if a 47-year-old married father of two who realizes he is gay could make such an announcement without being forced to leave political office. And we wonder also, will the day come, ever, when he could?”

— **CNN’s Miles O’Brien on August 12, filling in as anchor of *NewsNight with Aaron Brown*.**

Bored by Mindless Conservatives

“As anyone who has sat through the 90-minute forums knows, the questions are not hand grenades that detonate onto the evening news. Take, for example, one of the first queries at the ‘Ask President Bush’ session in Beaverton, Ore., on Friday: ‘I’m wondering if I can get some inauguration tickets?’ Or consider this from Albuquerque on Wednesday: ‘Can I introduce my mother and mother-in-law, who are new citizens to this country?’ Many times the questions aren’t even questions at all. Exhibit A might be these words from an audience member in Niceville, Fla., on Tuesday: ‘I’m 60 years old and I’ve voted Republican from the very first time I could vote. And I also want to say this is the very first time that I have felt that God was in the White House.’”

— ***New York Times* White House reporter Elisabeth Bumiller in an August 16 story about President Bush’s forums with voters.**

...Wowed by “Homespun” Liberals

“The Kerry campaign’s newest signature [is] the ‘front porch visit’ — though the porch is optional. Mr. Kerry and his running mate, Senator John Edwards of North Carolina, have held 10 such homespun events, in middle-class neighborhoods across Iowa, Florida, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania and here in Oregon since stumbling across the form in mid-June....The low-key, invitation-only events, where perhaps 100 people sit around red-checked picnic tables, raising hands with questions rather than waving signs with slogans, mimic the town-hall style campaigning for the Iowa caucuses at which both Mr. Kerry and Mr. Edwards excelled....Situated mainly in swing states, the visits are intended to emphasize the Democrats’ kitchen-table economic appeal — light on partisanship, laden with ‘we’re here for you.’”

— ***New York Times* reporter Jodi Wilgoren in an August 17 story headlined, “Front-Porch Chat: Birth of a Kerry Campaign Tactic.”**

Touting Castro’s Hallucinations

“There’s a good chance that Fidel Castro, who marks his 78th birthday today, could keep going for another 40 years, the Cuban leader’s personal physician says....Cuban officials say the same revolutionary zeal that has driven nearly five decades of socialism can overcome the ravages of time....At least 40 different Cuban research groups are said to be at work unlocking the secrets of aging. The research ranges from studying special diets to basic research on genetics.”

— **Reporter Eric Sabo in an August 13 *USA Today* story headlined, “Cuba pursues a 120-year-old future.”**

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