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Fearing Sotomayor Not Liberal Enough

“Where does she stand? Liberal activists voicing concerns over Supreme Court nominee Sonia Sotomayor and her stance on abortion. This morning they’re demanding to know if she’s pro-choice or pro-life — and why President Obama never asked.”

— NBC’s Matt Lauer opening *Today*, May 28.

Anchor Katie Couric: “Pundits usually label judges as either liberal or conservative, but that won’t be easy with Judge Sotomayor...”

Correspondent Wyatt Andrews: “[President Obama] has found a judge with 17 years experience, but no clear ideology on discrimination, gay rights, or abortion, and who can’t be easily defined by political labels.”

— CBS *Evening News*, May 27.



Touting Obama’s “Latina Powerhouse”

Co-host Diane Sawyer: “The battle begins: How will President Obama’s Latina powerhouse handle the opposition?”...

Correspondent Claire Shipman: “Even as a little girl, growing up in a drug-ridden South Bronx housing project, stricken with juvenile diabetes, she had that trademark knack: instead of seeing dead ends, young Sonia saw possibilities; instead of giving up, she investigated every angle.... She’s also an avid Yankees fan, a mean guacamole maker, and a fierce biker.”

— ABC’s *Good Morning America*, May 27.



Bob Schieffer: “This woman has a life story that you couldn’t make up! I mean, you know, she’s born in the public projects, in the shadow of Yankee Stadium, a single parent household, she goes to a Catholic school, she gets scholarships to the best schools in the country, Princeton and Yale, she overcomes all that while dealing with diabetes all her life, and she is Hispanic.... This was the political advisor’s dream candidate.”...

Anchor Katie Couric: “It is a very, as you say, very, very compelling life story.”

— Exchange during CBS’s live coverage of Obama’s selection of Sotomayor, May 26.

Not a Single Man Worthy of Supreme Court Seat?

Conservative commentator Pat Buchanan: “You got down to four women, not a single white male — all women. And then we’re going to pick an Hispanic-”

Anchor Norah O’Donnell, interrupting: “Did it ever occur to you, Pat, that maybe there weren’t any white men who were qualified?”

— MSNBC live coverage, May 27.

Siding with Pelosi vs. the CIA

Host Gordon Peterson: “Why does it matter what Nancy knew or did not know? Evan?”

Newsweek’s Evan Thomas: “It doesn’t. This is all noise, this is all noise.... To be all righteous about it now, I think, is really a waste of time.”...

NPR’s Nina Totenberg: “I don’t think it matters, except that it is a diversion that is encouraged by former Bush people.... And I think it’s entirely plausible — and maybe even probable — that the CIA told the technical truth in a way that did mislead Nancy Pelosi.”

— Talking about Pelosi’s charge that CIA briefers mislead Congress “all the time,” May 15 *Inside Washington*.



“Why Not” Bring Terrorists to America?

“What’s the problem here? We have, as Jake mentioned and Senator Feinstein said on the Senate floor, we have terrorists in U.S. prisons, so why not the guys from Guantanamo?”

— ABC’s Charles Gibson asking George Stephanopoulos about the Senate’s 90-6 vote to deny Obama funds for closing the Guantanamo Bay prison, *World News*, May 20.



“Sleazy” Cheney’s Speech: “An Absolute Abomination”

“Well, he [Dick Cheney] came today to — obviously to do nothing much other than defend torture, which he calls ‘tough questioning.’ This was as sleazy a presentation by a Vice President as we’ve had since Spiro Agnew. This was an absolute abomination.... This guy just has to lie from beginning to end through his setup of his opposition’s position in order to advance any of his ideas at all, none of which have any proof to them at all.... This is the kind of sleazy arguing that this guy does in these speeches. It is just ridiculous. It is an insult to the intelligence of anyone who’s listening to him.”

— MSNBC political analyst Lawrence O’Donnell during live coverage following Cheney’s speech on terrorism, May 21.

“Is it appropriate, though, for your father, who has had access to high-level intelligence for — for eight years, to be very publicly waving a flag, saying, we’re much weaker now than ever before? Isn’t that, in fact, emboldening our enemies?... If a Democrat was doing this in a Republican administration, wouldn’t the Republicans be saying, this is traitorous?”

— CNN’s Anderson Cooper to former Vice President Cheney’s daughter, Liz, on *Anderson Cooper 360*, May 21.

Cheney Like Glenn Close in “Fatal Attraction”

Host Chris Matthews: “Some say Cheney’s refusal to move on reminds them of *Groundhog Day*, but you could also say it’s like that more frighteningly relentless Glenn Close in *Fatal Attraction*. Like Cheney, she was not gonna be ignored.... Howard, what do you think? Cheney? *Fatal Attraction*? What do you make? He will not be ignored, this guy.”

Newsweek’s Howard Fineman: “Ha, ha. Yeah, yeah I don’t think he’s going to boil the rabbit. Let’s put it that way.”

Matthews: “Or come out of that bathtub, like that other scene in that movie! Everybody is gonna go see *Fatal Attraction* again.”

— Exchange on *The Chris Matthews Show*, May 17.



Fretting Cheney “Made It Much Harder to Close Guantanamo”

“If the presumption is Guantanamo was going to be closed by either Bush, McCain, or Obama, it just got much more difficult this week because the Vice President [Cheney] made it political. He went on shows saying basically ‘I don’t want to be the member of the House who sees terrorists brought to a jail in my district.’ And that changed this debate in a way that has made it much, much harder to close Guantanamo.... Cheney really did damage to the effort to keep our country secure by turning this into a political issue.”

— *The Politico*’s Jeanne Cummings on *Inside Washington*, May 22.

CNN Salutes Obama’s “Courage” on Abortion

Correspondent Suzanne Malveaux: “[President Obama will] also take on the issue of abortion. Talking about... a need to emphasize the commonality of both sides, but that in some ways these two camps are irreconcilable when it comes to ultimately what they think about a woman’s right to choose....”

Anchor Fredricka Whitfield: “It sounds like, Suzanne, this is a very courageous move. And I wonder if the President or if the White House in any way conveyed to you whether there was a lot of angst that the President had... about whether he wanted to make his commencement speech one that would use the words ‘abortion,’ that would use the words ‘embryonic stem cell research,’ as opposed to focusing primarily on a challenge for the future, because so often that’s what commencement speeches do?”

Malveaux: “Sure, well, this was — the President, obviously in a position that he had to address the issue. This has become such a hot button issue, obviously, on this campus the last couple of weeks....”

— CNN live coverage before President Obama delivered the commencement address at the University of Notre Dame, May 17.

California's Problem = Unwillingness to Raise Taxes

"Thirty-eight million Californians woke up this morning with their state \$21 billion in the red....Part of California's problem is that it takes a two-thirds vote in the state legislature to raise taxes, while voters oppose any cuts in services."

— NBC's George Lewis on the *May 20 Nightly News*.

"State governments are swimming in red ink, overwhelmed by the tanking economy. Here in California, the problem is even worse because of its sheer size and an unwillingness to raise taxes. Thirty years ago, Californians passed Proposition 13, mandating an almost unachievable two-thirds vote by the legislature to raise taxes."

— ABC's Laura Marquez on *World News*, May 19.



Which Way Is It?

"Housing Boom Aided Minorities; Homeownership Reached Record Levels, Narrowing the Gap With Whites"

— *Wall Street Journal* headline, May 13.

vs.

"Homeownership Losses Are Greatest Among Minorities, Report Finds"

— Headline in the *May 13 New York Times*, reporting on the same study from the Pew Hispanic Center.

"Capitalism Is Like a Child" that Needs Government Supervision

"I don't think that left to its own devices, capitalism moves along smoothly and everyone gets treated fairly in the process. Capitalism is like a child: if you want the child to grow up free and productive, somebody's got to look over the shoulder of that child."

— PBS host Tavis Smiley in a *Time* magazine symposium on "The Future of Capitalism," May 25 issue.

By Following Limbaugh, GOP Making "Complete Fools of Themselves"

"Rush Limbaugh is good for the party. Drive it all the way down, take it down as low as it can go, make complete fools of themselves, because it's always darkest before the dawn, and then maybe a moderate can come in and rescue them."

— *Newsweek* Editor-at-Large Evan Thomas on *Inside Washington*, May 15.

Harry's Big "Regret" = Not Editorializing Against Iraq War

"You know, I remember being in Iraq...a couple of weeks before the war started and it came — it was really, really clear to me on the ground that this didn't make any sense. And I remember coming back, but there was all this, sort of, preponderance of opinion that this, this thing should go on. And I kept thinking to myself, 'This doesn't — there's — I'm not connecting the dots everybody else is connecting.' And if I have a regret in my reporting life that I didn't stand up then and say, 'This doesn't make any sense.'"

— Co-host Harry Smith on CBS's *Early Show*, May 15.

Tom Channels His Inner Hippie

"The vital signs of your mother — Mother Earth — have taken a turn for the worse....How we live on a smaller planet with many more people is a reality that will define your generation for the rest of your lives....We need you to celebrate one another in a common cause of restoring economic justice and true value, advancing racial and religious tolerance, creating a healthier planet."

— Tom Brokaw giving the commencement address at Fordham University, May 16.



Notable Quotables

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