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## Republican Party = A Bunch of Extremely Conservative Extremists

“The party’s ideas — about economic issues, social issues and just about everything else — are not popular ideas. They are extremely conservative ideas tarred by association with the extremely unpopular George W. Bush, who helped downsize the party to its extremely conservative base. A hard-right agenda of slashing taxes for the investor class, protecting marriage from gays, blocking universal health insurance and extolling the glories of water-boarding produces terrific ratings for Rush Limbaugh, but it’s not a majority agenda.”

— *Time*’s Michael Grunwald in the magazine’s May 18 cover story declaring the Republican Party an “Endangered Species.”



“I don’t think the Republicans would appreciate the comparison, but they’re exactly like the Labor Party in England in the 1970s. They’re letting their extremists take them straight down. The same thing is going to happen — they had to disappear for a while and when they reinvented themselves they did it with moderates, they did it with Tony Blair.”

— *Newsweek*’s Evan Thomas on *Inside Washington*, May 1.

## Republicans Must Go Liberal If They Want to “Look Sane”

*Time*’s Joe Klein: “I think health care is a real litmus test for this party....If the Republicans show some moderation on this issue and don’t just say, ‘No,’ then it’ll be a sign that they might be able to come back....It makes them look sane! It brings them into the, you know, the mainstream of American politics.”...

Moderator Chris Matthews: “Can they get past the cacophony of Rush Limbaugh, Dick Cheney, Newt Gingrich? These are sort of trollish figures. These aren’t the caring people, are they? I mean you talk about compassion.”

— Exchange on *The Chris Matthews Show*, May 3.



## Jack Kemp: Clueless Amateur Who Damaged America

“If the Republican Party had only followed his [Jack Kemp’s] advice about reaching out to the inner cities and underclass — and ignored his happy talk about supply-side economics — the GOP might not be in nearly the fix it is today....[Kemp] was a classic case of an amateur econo-cultist whose understanding never reached quite deep enough. In mid-life, when he decided to switch from sports to politics, Kemp became enamored of simplistic free-market ideas, in particular a toxic combination of Arthur Laffer and Ayn Rand. He then sold another gifted amateur, Ronald Reagan, on the idea that drastic tax cuts would so stimulate the economy that the ensuing growth would more than make up for the loss in revenues.... The damage was done, and thanks in part to Jack Kemp the supply-side fantasy endured, producing the vast Reagan deficits.”

— *Newsweek* Senior Editor Michael Hirsh writing about the late Jack Kemp in a May 4 blog posting.

## Scorning Cheney’s “Crazy Jihad,” “One Man Hate-Fest”

“I have to ask myself at a certain point, you know, is Dick Cheney running for President?...In some ways, I kind of admire this, kind of, crazy jihad, this one man, kind of, hate-fest that he runs on cable shows. I mean, I guess he feels he has to defend what he did....But, you know, he’s so damaging to the Republican Party every time he comes out....When he said on that show [CBS’s *Face the Nation*] that Rush Limbaugh rather than Colin Powell was the face of the party, it was like once again, that huge, fat crazy frame fills the screen and becomes the face of the party.”

— Former *New Yorker* and *Vanity Fair* editor Tina Brown on MSNBC’s *Morning Joe*, May 12.



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## Like Her Own Personal Harlequin Romance

**Anchor Norah O'Donnell:** “Savannah, let me just start with you, the shock factor. I mean, you’ve got that seat right there by where the President walked out. Were you surprised?”

**NBC’s Savannah Guthrie:** “Shocked is more like it, Norah. I felt a little bit like I was having a dream sequence minus the pink unicorn. I have to say, we attend those briefings every day, they are rarely so exciting.”

— Discussing President Obama’s unannounced visit to the White House briefing room to talk about Justice David Souter’s retirement, MSNBC live coverage, May 1.



## ABC Assumes Second Term for Obama?

“The President concluding his third primetime news conference on 100 days in the White House.... 100 days in office. 1,362 days remaining in his first term. We’re going to return you now to regular programming.”

— ABC’s Charles Gibson wrapping up live coverage of President Obama’s press conference, April 29.

## “Quintessential Obama” Gets Leaders Hugging

**White House correspondent Chuck Todd:** “I think that we will look back on this and say this is quintessential Obama. This is the Obama Doctrine at work. Bring two sides [the leaders of Pakistan and Afghanistan] together, get them talking and do this a lot....”

**Foreign Affairs correspondent Andrea Mitchell:** “They’ve pointed out that, as in contrast to the last time, the Afghan leader and a previous Pakistani leader met at the White House, another President, George W. Bush, they wouldn’t even shake hands. This time there was a warm embrace, a promise to work together.”

— *NBC Nightly News*, May 6.

## Like Saying “Rape Is an Enhanced Seduction Technique”

“To call something an ‘enhanced interrogation technique’ doesn’t alter the fact that we thought it was torture when the Japanese used it on American prisoners, we thought it was torture when the North Koreans used it, we thought it was torture when the Soviets used it.... You know, it’s almost the moral equivalent of saying that rape is an enhanced seduction technique.”

— Ted Koppel in a commentary for the BBC’s *World News America*, May 11.



## Sarah Palin, Illiterate Embarrassment

“Sarah Palin — now don’t laugh — is writing a book. Not just reading a book, writing a book. Actually, in the word of the publisher, she’s ‘collaborating’ on a book.... What an embarrassment! It’s one of these ‘I told you,’ books that jocks do. You know she’s already declared — I mean, why they do it like this? ‘She can’t write, we got a collaborator for her.’”

— MSNBC’s Chris Matthews on *Hardball*, May 13.

## Yesterday’s “Robber Baron” = Today’s “Shrewd” Philanthropist

“Carlos, a very shrewd businessman with an appreciation for great brands, showed a deep understanding of the role that news, information and education play in our interconnected global society.... As he spoke at our meeting, he conveyed the quiet but fierce confidence that has enabled him to have a profound and lasting effect on millions of individuals in Mexico and neighboring countries.”

— *New York Times* publisher Arthur Sulzberger, Jr., saluting Mexican businessman Carlos Slim in an essay naming him one of *Time*’s 100 most influential people, May 11 edition.

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“Mr. Slim is richer even than the robber barons of the gilded age.... But the momentous scale is not the most galling aspect of Mr. Slim’s riches. There’s the issue of theft. Like many a robber baron — or Russian oligarch, or Enron executive — Mr. Slim calls to mind the words of Honoré de Balzac: ‘Behind every great fortune there is a crime.’ Mr. Slim’s sin, if not technically criminal, is like that of Rockefeller, the sin of the monopolist.”

— *New York Times* editorial page writer Eduardo Porter writing about Carlos Slim in an August 27, 2007 “editorial observer” column, a year before Slim loaned the *Times* \$250 million.

## MSNBC Anchor Upset by Partisanship of...Fox News

“Look, if Fox wants to consider themselves the GOP house organ, that’s fine. They completely backed it up. When Fox starts describing themselves as journalists or a news organization, that’s where I think it’s appropriate to describe Fox as disgraceful.... Their coverage on the Fox News Channel has been atrocious. The stuff that comes out of Sean Hannity’s mouth has been infuriating. The stuff that Bill O’Reilly says has been illogical. You go up and down the schedule and it’s insanity over there.... The number of lies, perpetuated, promoted by Fox News is just shameful and it hurts everybody.”

— MSNBC daytime anchor David Shuster on left-wing host Stephanie Miller’s radio show, April 30.



## Wanda May Be Edgy, But Rush Is Really Offensive

“[At the White House Correspondents Dinner, comedian Wanda Sykes] told a joke about Rush Limbaugh as being one of the hijackers and the reason he didn’t make the flight was because he was, you know, on drugs, or whatever.... I ran into Keith Olbermann afterwards, and he said ‘I’m not sure, I think that was probably in bad taste.’ I said, ‘What do you think her job is?’... Any comedian, anybody who does that job, their job is to push the envelope.... You can’t go home to the community of comedians unless you’ve gone too far.”

— CBS’s Harry Smith on *The Early Show*, May 11.



*Time*’s Joe Klein: “Comedy is by definition inappropriate. I mean, this is just comedy. And we’re talking about a guy in Rush Limbaugh who is inappropriate half the time I hear him on the radio.”...

Amanda Carpenter, *The Washington Times*: “She could have done a fine job that was in better taste.” Klein: “So could Rush. He could be in a lot better taste. On a daily basis, he’s delivering misinformation, lies, to a large audience in America. That is far more serious than telling a couple of jokes at a banquet.”

— Discussing Sykes’ bashing of Limbaugh, CNN’s *Reliable Sources*, May 10.

## Barack Obama: Simply “Too Competent” to Joke About

“It’s not because he’s black and it’s not because we’re afraid. It’s just that he’s, just so far, just a little too damn competent and we ain’t used to that.”

— CBS’s *Late Show with David Letterman* writer Bill Scheft at a May 8 comedy writers’ panel shown on C-SPAN, talking about why there are so few late night jokes about President Obama.

## Admiring America’s First Vulcan President

“Spock’s cool, analytical nature feels more fascinating and topical than ever now that we’ve put a sort of Vulcan in the White House. All through the election campaign, columnists compared President Obama’s unflappably logical demeanor and prominent ears with Mr. Spock’s.... Like Obama, Spock is the product of a mixed marriage (actually, an interstellar mixed marriage), and he suffers blunt manifestations of prejudice as a result....

“With the willfully hegemonic Bush administration now gone, the tenets of [*Star Trek* creator Gene] Roddenberry’s fictional universe feel very much in step with current events. Whether you’re happy about it or not, the Obama foreign policy, at least for now, emphasizes cross-cultural exchange and eschews imperialistic swagger. That sounds very much in sync with the Federation’s Prime Directive, which stipulates that humanity should observe but never interfere with alien cultures (no Iraq-style invasions, in other words).”

— *Newsweek*’s Steve Daly in his May 4 cover story, “We’re All Trekkies Now.”



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