

Notable Quotables

May 19, 2008 (Vol. 21; No. 10)

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



America's
Media Watchdog

GOP Peddles "Hate" and "Slime"

"[For Obama] the real test is yet to come. The Republican Party has been successfully scaring voters since 1968, when Richard Nixon built a Silent Majority out of lower- and middle-class folks frightened or disturbed by hippies and student radicals and blacks rioting in the inner cities....It is a sure bet that the GOP will try to paint Obama as 'the other' — as a haughty black intellectual who has Muslim roots (Obama is a Christian) and hangs around with America-haters....The real question is whether he [McCain] can — or really wants to — rein in the merchants of slime and sellers of hate who populate the Internet and fund the 'independent expenditure' groups who exercise their freedom in ways that give a bad name to free speech."

— Richard Wolffe and Evan Thomas, May 19 *Newsweek*.

Brace for GOP Nastiness

"[In 1988] the Republicans used the symbols of nationhood (notably, whether schoolchildren should be required to recite the Pledge of Allegiance) to bludgeon the Democrats, challenge their patriotism and utterly redefine their nominee, Gov. Michael S. Dukakis of Massachusetts. The memory of that campaign — reinforced, for many, by the attacks on Senator John Kerry's war record in the 2004 election — haunts Democrats of a certain generation....Like Mr. Dukakis in 1988, Mr. Obama is relatively new to the national scene, and thus vulnerable to being defined by Republican attacks. And like Mr. Dukakis, Mr. Obama lacks experience with the politics of wedge issues on a national stage."

— *New York Times* correspondent Robin Toner in a front-page "Political Memo," May 4.

"Let's talk about this Jeremiah Wright controversy....You remember the swift boating of John Kerry....Do you see a fall election campaign where there are images of Barack Obama and Jeremiah Wright side by side? Is it going to hurt him?"

— NBC's Matt Lauer to former Democratic presidential candidate John Edwards on *Today*, May 9.

Smearing Democratic Patriots

"'Out of the mainstream' is a charge Republicans habitually make against Democrats. It's code for 'unpatriotic.' And it worries Democrats that it's been so effective against their candidates in the past — even against those who've received the Purple Heart."

— CBS reporter Dean Reynolds on the May 4 *Evening News*, closing out a story over 2004 video of John Kerry.

Holding Obama's Feet to the Fire

Anchor Brian Williams: "Last time we were together, I handed you a copy of *Newsweek*, it was the first time you'd held it in your hands with you on the cover. Have you yet held this [*Time* magazine cover declaring Obama the winner] in your hands?"

Senator Barack Obama: "No, I don't want to. Because the last time it was in New Hampshire and I ended up losing. So, I'm not sure if it's the magazine or you, Brian, that's the jinx, but I'm not taking any chances."

Williams: "Last time, you looked at it and you thought instantly of your mom."

Obama: "She'd like that picture. She always encouraged me to smile more."

— *NBC Nightly News*, May 8.

Co-host John Roberts: "I want to just stipulate at the beginning of this interview, we are declaring a Reverend Wright-free zone today. So, no questions about Reverend Wright. Our viewers want us to move on, so this morning we're going to move on. Is that okay with you?"

Barack Obama: "Fair enough. That sounds just fine."

— *CNN's American Morning*, May 5.

Obama, Victim of "Nasty" Race

"You have known him [Jeremiah Wright] for more than 20 years. He officiated your wedding. He baptized your children. When he went up there before the national press and said your husband criticized him because he's a politician, because that's what they do to get elected, did he betray you?...How painful was that? This is somebody who you confided in....Do you think that your husband has been treated fairly? Are you surprised at how nasty this race has gotten?"

— *CNN's Suzanne Malveaux to Michelle Obama, Anderson Cooper 360*, April 30.

Real Culprit: Racist Whites

"To see his [Jeremiah Wright's] career completely destroyed by three 20-second sound bites, all of the work he has done, his entire legacy gone down the drain, has been absolutely devastating to me — to him, sorry....We are still a racist country....I think that so many white people who had never been inside a black church were absolutely shocked by the tone and language that they heard [from Wright]....I think it brought out a lot of latent racism."

— *Washington Post* writer Sally Quinn on PBS's *Charlie Rose*, April 30.

Limbaugh's Shameful Mischief

"Let me ask you about this Limbaugh factor. If Hillary Clinton wins this squeaker in Indiana...many could say that the margin of error...was generated by a mischief-making by a radio talk show host, a talk jock....Anyone who voted to screw up the political system of this country with the purpose of mischief should carry that with them the rest of their lives. What a ridiculous way to use the vote for which people fought and died, to use that vote to make mischief. I hope you're proud of yourself."

— **MSNBC's Chris Matthews during live primary coverage May 6, talking about Rush Limbaugh urging listeners to vote for Clinton to keep the Democrats in chaos.**

Republicans vs. "Scientific Fact"

Anchor Wolf Blitzer: "He [McCain] makes it clear he believes there is this problem, Jeffrey, called global warming, in marked contrast to a lot of other Republicans out there who aren't yet convinced that this is a serious problem."

CNN senior analyst Jeffrey Toobin: "Well, you know, this story illustrates just how low the bar is for Republicans on the environment. [laughter] You know, the fact that he acknowledges global warming is seen as a big advantage for him, but it's like acknowledging gravity. It is a scientific fact. [laughter] Now, the real issue is not whether it exists. The question is what to do about it, and, in that area, he's not as far to the right as Bush is, but he's pretty close."

— **CNN's *The Situation Room*, May 12.**

Tornadoes: The Earth Fights Back

"This has been one of the most active, deadly tornado seasons in a long time....I talked to three people, casual conversation today, all of them smart, saying, 'I don't know, we must be doing something to our Earth.' So once and for all, what's going on?"

— **NBC *Nightly News* anchor Brian Williams to NBC WeatherPlus meteorologist Bill Karins, May 12. Karins discounted global warming as a cause.**

Sean Hannity = "Junkyard Dog"

CBS's Morley Safer: "Liberal politics has always been his [actor Alec Baldwin's] passion....He has an impressive grasp of the issues and spends a huge amount of his time and money supporting causes he believes in....But his bare-knuckled approach to political discourse—"

Clip of Alec Baldwin: "Not all Republicans are as insane as these extremist conservatives."

Safer: "—has made him an easy target for conservative junkyard dogs like Sean Hannity."

— **From a *60 Minutes* profile of Baldwin, May 11.**

Either "Smart" or "Conservative"

"As far as Reverend Wright, we're hearing from voters there that it's not really influencing them too much. At, at least, the smart, educated pool of voters who go to the primaries, they're not buying necessarily this guilt by association. But, that being said, what about your more conservative, white, rural voters? And I don't know...."

— **Raleigh, North Carolina TV reporter Kim Genardo previewing the North Carolina primary on the nationally-syndicated *Chris Matthews Show*, May 4.**

We're as Awful as China's Despots

"Just as Jim Crow laws blunted the force of moral outrage against the Nazis [when they hosted the 1936 Olympics], the specter of Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo has blunted the force of arguments about Chinese political repression."

— ***Washington Post* arts critic Philip Kennicott in a May 10 item about a new exhibit at the Holocaust Museum.**

America's Army of Illiterates

"If you can read, you can walk into a job later on. If you don't, then you've got the Army, Iraq, I don't know, something like that. It's not as bright."

— **Novelist Stephen King at an April 4 Library of Congress event for high schoolers later carried by C-SPAN2.**

BBC's Ludicrous Caricature

"Many Americans drive private cars not much smaller than this truck, and the risk is that they use their tax rebate simply to buy fuel, boosting the profits of the oil companies but doing little or nothing for the wider American economy."

— **BBC correspondent Justin Webb standing next to an 18-wheel big rig in a story on *BBC World*, April 30.**

John McCain's Secret Agent?

"I think Reverend [Jeremiah] Wright might be being paid by the Republicans. [laughter and applause] That's what I think....He's on the payroll!"

— **ABC's *The View* co-host Joy Behar, April 30.**

Wright Makes Sense to Rosie

"Racism does exist in this country and it's still thriving. And some of the things that Jeremiah Wright says he's held accountable for....but there are things that white preachers said that are just as insane....There is a place in the world [for] an inspirational, liberational kind of preaching that Reverend Wright does....I listen to him, and frankly, it made sense to me. I totally understood what he was saying."

— **Rosie O'Donnell on NBC's *Today*, May 5.**

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