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3rd Place Cable Host Uses "Worst in the World!" Segment to Savage Conservatives & His Competitors

The "Worst" of MSNBC's Keith Olbermann

Believe it or not, MSNBC's Keith Olbermann says he's not biased. In March he told C-SPAN his philosophy was to "go after power. You don't go after a Republican or a Democrat." Last June he told the *Houston Chronicle* that while his world view included elements from the "liberal play book," his on-air approach is strictly even-handed. "My point of view is about delivering information and context," Olbermann claimed. "It has nothing to do with a political point of view."

But those who watch Olbermann's weekday *Countdown* program know he regularly seeks to please the far left with liberal agenda segments, ranging from whether George W. Bush is the "worst President ever" to promoting loopy theories that the Republicans stole the 2004 election.

Olbermann has now helped the Media Research Center quantify his anti-conservative bent. Beginning one year ago this week, Olbermann has picked his choice for the "Worse," "Worser," and "Worst Person in the World!" As he told a TV writer last December, "It's a euphemism for somebody who's wrong and egregiously stupid and abusing their own position."

To find out what irks Olbermann, MRC researchers examined every one of his "Worst" segments from their debut on June 30, 2005 to this past Friday, June 23. While many of his targets weren't political (last week he scolded a Chinese restaurant that served meatballs made from cats), about a third of the time (33%), Olbermann's wrath was aimed at a notable liberal or a conservative, or someone flailed for an ideological stance, such as on March 15 when he castigated "doubters of global warming" because yellow sand was falling from the sky in South Korea.

For someone who claims his editorial decisions have "nothing to do with a political point of view," Olbermann has thrown nearly all of his punches at conservatives. Of the 197 politically-salient designees, nearly nine out of ten (174, or 88%) attacked conservative targets or ideas, compared with 23 nominees (12%) in which liberals were on the receiving end of Olbermann's ire. Among those

attacked by Olbermann: Bill Frist, Donald Rumsfeld, Antonin Scalia, Rick Santorum, Tom DeLay and Pat Robertson (four times). Never targeted: Hillary Clinton, Howard Dean, Michael Moore, or even William Jefferson, the Congressman alleged to have stuffed tens of thousands of dollars in bribe money into his freezer. (See the complete listing at www.mrc.org.)

Among the few liberals he did criticize: Representative Cynthia McKinney, for slugging a police officer, and New York comptroller Alan Hevesi, for telling graduates that

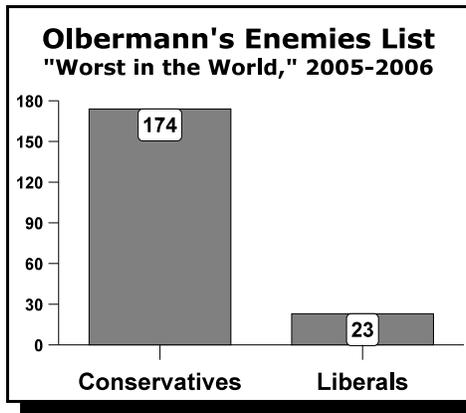
Senator Charles Schumer would like to "put a bullet between the President's eyes." But Hevesi was just the runner-up that night; Olbermann decided his Bush hate wasn't as bad as the Filipino cab driver who accidentally rammed a hearse, sending a corpse flying out of its coffin and into traffic.

Olbermann uses his podium to attack his non-liberal media competitors, especially FNC host Bill O'Reilly, whom Olbermann disparages as "the big giant head" or "Ted Baxter," the dim anchor from *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*.

O'Reilly has been a target 42 times; in contrast, Olbermann has only badmouthed Saddam Hussein twice, most recently on Friday after learning that the ex-dictator's "hunger strike" actually amounted to skipping only a single meal.

Olbermann's other media targets: Rush Limbaugh (11 times), Ann Coulter (9), Brit Hume (4), Neal Boortz (3), Glenn Beck (3), the *New York Post* (2) and columnist Michelle Malkin (2), whom Olbermann rudely called "crazier and dumber than we all thought" and a "nitwit." Sneering at conservatives may make Olbermann popular among left-wing bloggers, but his bias makes him the obvious choice for "Worst Anchorman in the World."

— Brad Wilmoth and Rich Noyes



L. Brent Bozell III, Publisher; **Brent Baker, Rich Noyes, Tim Graham**, Editors; **Geoffrey Dickens, Brian Boyd, Brad Wilmoth, Megan McCormack, Mike Rule** and **Scott Whitlock**, Media Analysts; **Michelle Humphrey**, Research Associate; **Michael Chapman**, Director of Communications. Sign up for daily *CyberAlerts* at www.mrc.org.