



Tell the Truth! 2004

# Media Reality ✓ Check

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Expert Documentation of the Latest Liberal Media Bias ⚡ Thursday, September 23, 2004

Geraldo Feels Sorry for Rather, Helen Thomas Says He's "Magnificent," Diane Sawyer Finds "A Giant"

## Lining Up in Dan Rather's Valley of Forgery

Despite some sharp investigative reporting on Rathergate and some journalists who have seen bias (even "obsession") in the forgery-stained *60 Minutes* story of September 8, a number of prominent journalists are joining Dan Rather inside his circled wagons.

■ **Diane Sawyer.** On Wednesday's *Larry King Live*, she cooed about Rather: "He is a towering journalist. We all know this. We live and die by headlines, all of us here. But let us never forget he's the guy who gets up out of the anchor chair and goes to Afghanistan. He's the guy who could have the cushy assignment, but he goes to the hurricane. He is an honest-to-goodness reporter. If anybody is hard on themselves, it is him first. And he is a giant in this business and I know he operates without fear or favor."

■ **Daniel Schorr.** The NPR commentator and former CBS reporter proclaimed CBS was "had" on Monday's *All Things Considered*. Schorr bemoaned "a trickster... took the mighty *60 Minutes* and Dan Rather to the cleaners." But Schorr scolded: "There will undoubtedly be a rash of CBS-bashing and Rather-bashing, and then life and politics will go on."

■ **Tom Shales.** On Monday's *Hardball* on MSNBC, the *Washington Post* TV critic said Rather cannot be blamed. He's just a news reader. "I mean, the title Managing Editor is sort of honorary, isn't it? I mean, and he was assured by others that the memos were real. He didn't go snooping around down in wherever the hell they came from."

■ **Aaron Brown.** On Monday's *NewsNight*, the CNN anchor insisted in a commentary: "There is not an honest reporter in the country today, not an honest news organization that hasn't in the last few days, when looking at the story of how the now CBS discredited documents on the

President's National Guard service, said 'there but for the grace of God go I,' excepting that some partisans will see it otherwise, will see willful deception on the part of CBS. Smarter and more reasoned heads know better."

### Bad Analogy: Bush Is Like O. J. Simpson?

"Like O. J. Simpson's infamous 'struggle' to squeeze his big hand into the glove, the letter was just a lousy piece of evidence that should never have been produced in court. Now because CBS, like Marcia Clark, screwed up the prosecution, Bush is going to walk." — *Washington Post* columnist **Tina Brown, September 23.**

■ **Geraldo Rivera.** At a *New York Post* party Tuesday night, the Fox host told *Women's Wear Daily*: "Dan's a friend of mine and I feel very badly for him. We all make mistakes."

■ **Helen Thomas.** The former UPI White House reporter called Rather "a magnificent reporter" who experienced every reporter's nightmare. "Truth is

our Holy Grail," she said at a journalism forum in New Jersey. "I'm sure everybody is feeling bad about it....To me, the real issue is why doesn't the President tell us the truth? Why doesn't he put out all the documents? Because he can't, because there are too many gaps." (At the same forum, AP legal affairs reporter Linda Deutsch agreed: "This is all so symptomatic of kill the messenger mentality.... They are interested more in Dan Rather....The underlying issue of Bush's National Guard Service is ignored....People are gloating over it. I find that very disturbing.")

By contrast, *Newsweek* reporter Howard Fineman told MSNBC host Don Imus Wednesday that he felt the CBS producer "Mary Mapes became obsessed with this story. In 1999, she began looking for evidence that then-Governor Bush had not shown up for and been derelict in his duty in the National Guard. She probably didn't like him politically, judging from everything I've read about her, and was gonna save the world from a George Bush presidency." He added that "if Roger Ailes and Fox had done something like this, you know, the world would be on fire."

— *Tim Graham*

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