



# SPECIAL REPORT

## AN IN-DEPTH STUDY, ANALYSIS OR REVIEW EXPLORING THE MEDIA

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September 2007

# Huffington's House of Horrors

## A Compendium of Far-Left Flame-Throwing, Name-Calling, and Attack-Dogging

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When she founded her blog two years ago, Arianna Huffington made a pledge that was quoted by *Newsweek*: "If you're looking for the usual flame-throwing, name-calling, and simplistic attack dog rhetoric...don't bother coming to The Huffington Post." But an MRC review of the first two years of the HuffPost's content reveals that flame-throwing, name-calling, and hate speech against conservatives are all on the website's everyday menu.

True to everything pundits decry about the blogosphere, the official bloggers of The Huffington Post, from celebrity dilettantes to lesser-known attack dogs, have made wild mudslinging and hate speech, usually against conservatives, a constant aim. They have savaged not only conservative opinion leaders, not only the Bush team, but the American public for its re-election of the Bush administration, in articles often loaded with profanity and crude sexual and excretory metaphors [**WARNING: Objectionable language appears uncensored**].

- Actor Sean Penn denounced America for its stupidity in allowing the war in Iraq: "We know it's not the administration alone, but a culture at large, cloaking itself in self-righteousness, religion, and adolescent hero-dreaming machismo." He mocked Rush Limbaugh as a drug addict, Sean Hannity as a "whore" for Roger Ailes and Rupert Murdoch, and Bill O'Reilly for "massaging his rectum with a loofah." America's failure to impeach President Bush would disgrace the nation: "we become a cum-stain on the flag we wave."

- Actor Alec Baldwin denounced the Vice President: "Cheney is a terrorist. He terrorizes our enemies abroad and innocent citizens here at home indiscriminately." When this drew critics on the Internet, Baldwin insincerely apologized: "How about

something more measured, then? How about...a lying, thieving Oil Whore. Or, a murderer of the U.S. Constitution?"

■ On the Fourth of July, 2006, Baldwin cooked up a double-murder fantasy. After dispatching Osama bin Laden with a box-cutter and hurling his corpse off a high balcony, "in the final stroke of luck, Bin Laden lands on Dick Cheney. God bless America."

■ Actor John Cusack declared: "Nixon, a true fiend, looks like a paragon of virtue next to the criminally incompetent robber barons now raiding the present and the future...This is indeed a league of bastards - these men are human scum."

■ Cusack then approvingly quoted from the late drug-addled journalist Hunter S. Thompson saying America now looked like "a Nazi monster" and denounced conservatives as "flag-sucking half-wits" who "speak for all that is cruel and stupid and vicious in the American character. They are the racists and hate mongers among us - they are the Ku Klux Klan. I piss down the throats of these Nazis."

■ Actress Christine Lahti proclaimed "Cindy Sheehan is my hero," and President Bush wouldn't talk to her because he "is scared shitless...his hands are covered in the blood of Cindy Sheehan's son. They are dripping with the blood of all who have died there."

■ HuffPost blogger Peter Mehlman, a former *Washington Post* sports reporter and *Seinfeld* script writer, baldly declared that Adolf Hitler was a better man than President George Bush, because even though Hitler tried to eliminate the Jews, "the Bush administration is the first that doesn't even mean well. You could argue that even the world's worst fascist dictators at least meant well."

Political pundits love to hail the "new media" in their new role of adding the voice of "the people" to the American political process. But any journalist or political analyst or media theorist who wants to lobby for accuracy and civility in our political discourse should not ignore the less than honorable and respectable verbiage that Arianna Huffington is publishing and enabling on her weblog.

# Huffington's House of Horrors

## A Compendium of Far-Left Flame-Throwing, Name-Calling, and Attack-Dogging

TIM GRAHAM  
MRC DIRECTOR OF MEDIA ANALYSIS

When Arianna Huffington founded The Huffington Post on May 9, 2005, she opened her new Internet venture with a pledge, as quoted by *Newsweek*: "If you're looking for the usual flame-throwing, name-calling, and simplistic attack dog rhetoric....don't bother coming to The Huffington Post."

Back in March, Huffington censored unauthorized commenters expressing regret that bombers in Afghanistan failed to kill Vice President Dick Cheney, drawing criticism for crushing free speech from HBO talk-show host Bill Maher. But the HuffPost's official bloggers, many of them Hollywood celebrities, have often matched that harshness of tone in posts that unloaded on the wrong-headedness of America and its re-election of the Bush administration, often loaded with profanity and crude sexual and excretory metaphors. **[WARNING: Objectionable language appears uncensored.]**

These blogs may not be typical, but they are common. Many bloggers in the Huffington house are liberals with a more conventionally combative tone and content. One example would be public-TV omnipresence Bill Moyers on May 11, offering a commentary later reproduced on taxpayer-supported PBS stations from coast to coast on *Bill Moyers Journal*: "You have to wonder how the last four years might have been different if only our President had asked sacrifice from everyone. Instead, mostly folks from the working class and professional soldiers are doing the dying in Iraq, while the rich spend their tax cuts. War on the cheap, except for those fighting it."

But just as presidential candidates are remembered by their nastiest ads – ask Moyers about his role in Lyndon Johnson's "Daisy" ads suggesting that the election of Barry Goldwater would lead to nuclear war – the Huffington Post might well be remembered for

its nastiest posts, which would not lead the average Internet user to conclude that liberals are kind-hearted, compassionate, and tolerant of people with opposing viewpoints.

### *The Celebrity Fulmination Files*

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The original attention-grabbing element of The Huffington Post's launch was its promise of an all-star far-left cast of celebrity dilettantes fulminating against everything conservatives wanted to accomplish for America. From the very beginning, it was clear that the official celebrity bloggers would demonstrate that what they lack in political sophistication, they can certainly compensate for in rhetorical excess.

**Impeach Bush or 'We Become a Cum-Stain on the Flag'?** Accepting the Christopher Reeve First Amendment Award at a Creative Coalition gala in New York City on December 18, 2006, actor Sean Penn went on a rant calling for the impeachment of President Bush and insulting conservatives from Rush Limbaugh to Sean Hannity. In the text of his prepared remarks, posted by The Huffington Post hours before he spoke, Penn asserted:

They tell us we lost 3,000 Americans on 9/11. Is that enough? We're about to match it. We're within weeks, if not less, of killing 3,000 Americans in Iraq. I ask Speaker Pelosi, can we put impeachment on the table then? Without former FEMA chief Mike Brown being held accountable, post Katrina (scapegoat though he may have been) we'd have had the same chaos and neglect when Rita hit Houston. Think about it. And, the same people who trumpet deterrence as a justification for punishment when we speak of "crime and punishment," will boast their positive thinking when dismissing the deterrent qualities of an impeachment proceeding....So...look, if we attempt to impeach for lying about a blowjob, yet accept these almost certain abuses without challenge, we become a cum-stain on the flag we wave.

He concluded by pleading: "Let's move forward and swiftly get out of this war in Iraq AND impeach these bastards." Penn derided conservatives for complicity with Bush:

...it seems inconceivable that this country could've ever bought into this war. Who were those mothers and fathers believing in?! We know it's not the administration alone, but a culture at large, cloaking itself in self-righteousness, religion, and adolescent hero-dreaming machismo. Would they have believed Rush Limbaugh if they'd known he was high as a kite on OxyContin? Would they have believed the factually impaired Bill O'Reilly if they knew he was massaging his rectum with a loofah while telephonically harassing a staffer? Hannity, had they known he was simply a whore to the cause of his pimps - Murdoch and Ailes? Or the little bow-tie putz, if they knew all he was seeking was a good laugh from Jon Stewart? Maybe our countrymen and women were listening to Ted Haggert [sic] while he was whiffing meth and boning a muscle-headed gigolo? Or Mark Foley seeking junior weenis [sic]? Joe Lieberman, sitting Shiva? And Toby Keith, singing about how big his boots are?

Ironically, as Penn accepted the award from PBS personality Charlie Rose, he still declared the liberal media (including PBS) were eager boosters of Bush's war:

Men and women stationed in Iraq at this moment, under orders of a Commander-in-Chief so sufficiently practiced in the art of deception, that he got vast numbers of American journalists and the most esteemed media outlets of this country, including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, NPR, and PBS to eagerly serve his agenda-building for war.

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**Cheney Is A Terrorist:** On February 17, 2006, actor Alec Baldwin described the Vice President of the United States in the most negative light:

Cheney is a terrorist. He terrorizes our enemies abroad and innocent citizens here at home indiscriminately. Who ever thought Harry Whittington would be the answer to America's prayers. Finally, someone who might get that lying, thieving Cheney into a courtroom to answer some direct questions.

A few days later, after hearing complaints about this rather indiscriminate remark, Baldwin insincerely apologized: "How about something more measured, then? How about...a lying, thieving Oil Whore. Or, a murderer of the U.S. Constitution?"

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**Could I Kill Cheney with Osama's Corpse?** On the Fourth of July, 2006, Alec Baldwin advanced his double-murder fantasy, by hurling the corpse of Osama bin Laden over a balcony onto Vice President Dick Cheney standing below:

At that instant, Osama Bin Laden comes out of a door. He is oblivious. I make my move. Bin Laden reacts, but too late. We tumble into his upper floor suite. I have him in my grasp and, conveniently, I spy a box cutter on the table. (Hey...it's a fantasy.) Osama struggles, swearing at me in his native tongue, until I jam the box cutter into his neck. I do it again. Fading, Bin Laden says (this time in English for my benefit) "Good luck with 30 Rock. I am a big Tina Fey fan." I gather up the body of the world's most notorious terrorist and hurl it over the balcony. Then, in the final stroke of luck, bin Laden lands on Dick Cheney.

Baldwin was also snide on the occasion of actual funerals. His quick and dirty take upon the death of former United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick was typical for the HuffPost, obscuring her talk of peace through strength: "I heard William Bennett on CNN, eulogizing Jean [sic] Kirkpatrick. He referred to her as the GOP's Thatcher and called her 'our Iron Lady.' What is it about these people that they can never talk of peace? (Even their women have to come across like Vince Lombardi.)"

**'Crypto-Fascist Scum' Mired Us In Iraq for Personal Gain:** As the 2006 elections approached, on October 10, Alec Baldwin rejoiced in the growing doom over Republican election prospects after the Mark Foley scandal broke. He couldn't believe the page scandal would matter more than the Bush record, and as usual, the incomparable Bush stupidity:

Nearly six years of lies, incompetence, lies, hate, lies, corruption, lies and war. Misguided, meaningless war that has destroyed the landscape of Iraq and the souls of the Iraqi people. And what has the war done for us, other than line the pockets of Bush, and his father's friends?

...DeLay may get away. Cheney. Novak. Armitage. Rumsfeld. All your crypto-fascist scum, as well. Bush, too, who will have no trouble raising money from his war-profiteering friends for a library which, I would imagine, will be the most poorly attended of any in our history. That's one certainty we can see on the horizon. Bush really is the worst president in American history. I almost feel sorry for him. Talked into the whole thing by his Dad's cronies. Unskilled. Unprepared. Just a bible in one hand and a copy of the "The Prince" in the other. How many of us knew this would never come to any good? How many of us could smell this guy 500 miles away?

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**Bush's "Human Scum," Supported by "Flag-Sucking Half Wits"?** Actor John Cusack was no slouch in the HuffPost's apparent competition in Hollywood Bush-bashing:

Bush 2. How depressing, corrupt, unlawful and tragically absurd the administration's world view actually is...how low the moral bar has been lowered...and (though I know I'm capable of intellectually lazy notions of collective guilt) how complicit our silence as citizens is...Nixon, a true fiend, looks like a paragon of virtue next to the criminally incompetent robber barons now raiding the present and future...This is indeed a league of bastards – these men are human scum." [The first two ellipses are Cusack's.]

Cusack then supportively quoted his idol, the drug-addled journalist Hunter S. Thompson – an excerpt from his 2002 book *Kingdom of Fear* that's widely circulated in the leftist blogosphere – declaring that America is now a "Nazi monster," and denounced conservatives as "flag-sucking half wits," Klansmen and Nazis:

We have become a Nazi monster in the eyes of the whole world – a nation of bullies and bastards who would rather kill than live peacefully. We are not just Whores for power and oil, but killer whores with hate and fear in our hearts. We are human scum, and that is how history will judge us. No redeeming social value. Just whores. Get out of our way, or we'll kill you. Well, shit on that dumbness, George W. Bush does not speak for me or my son or my mother or my friends or the people I respect in this world. We didn't vote for these cheap, greedy little killers who speak for America today – and we will not vote for them again in 2002. Or 2004. Or ever. Who does vote for these dishonest shitheads? Who among us can be happy and proud of having all this innocent blood on our hands? Who are these

swine? These flag-sucking half-wits who get fleeced and fooled by stupid rich kids like George Bush? They are the same ones who wanted to have Muhammad Ali locked up for refusing to kill gooks. They speak for all that is cruel and stupid and vicious in the American character. They are the racists and hate mongers among us – they are the Ku Klux Klan. I piss down the throats of these Nazis. And I am too old to worry about whether they like it or not. Fuck them.”

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**Bloody-Handed Bush, Scared of Heroic Cindy Sheehan:** Actress Christine Lahti, perhaps best known for starring on the CBS medical drama *Chicago Hope* in the 1990s, unloaded the S-bomb on President Bush as she offered her overflowing admiration for war protester Cindy Sheehan during her time perched outside Bush’s ranch in Crawford, Texas. The post was dated August 11, 2005:

Cindy Sheehan is my hero. She is the hero of all Americans who make up the 62 percent of us who oppose this war. As an American exercising her right to free speech, she is a brave, passionate, living example of democracy and she has the undeniable force and the moral authority of a grieving mother. Being a mother of three, I can’t even imagine the depths of the grief she must feel having lost her son in this horrific war. But I can imagine that her grief and rage – her demand for justice and action – are a force that is unstoppable.

No wonder Bush is intimidated. No wonder he can’t even walk down his driveway to speak with her. He is scared shitless. Whether he acknowledges it or not – whether his aides try to insulate him from the truth or not – his hands are covered in the blood of Cindy Sheehan’s son. They are dripping with the blood of all who have died there.

**Forget His American Birth, Deport Alberto Gonzales:** HBO talk-show host Bill Maher wrote a blog post with a typical HuffPost headline (“Why Not Impeachment?”) on August 23, 2006, full of enthusiasm that then-Attorney General Alberto Gonzales could be deported, despite his American birth:

[F]ederal law expressly makes the ordering of surveillance under the program a federal felony. That would mean that the president could be guilty of no fewer than *30 felonies while in office*. [Italics Maher’s.] Moreover, it is not only illegal for a president to order such surveillance, it is illegal for other government officials to carry out such an order. And that means Alberto Gonzalez [sic] could be tried, convicted, and deported.

Maher also added to the usual profanity with an April 12, 2007 post headlined “John McCain Fucked by the Republican Fantasy World.” Maher delighted in how “ridiculous and out of touch” the GOP presidential nominee was going to sound in 2008 sounding positive about progress in Iraq: “In fact, two-thirds of likely GOP primary voters support what Bush is doing in Iraq. They support the surge. They’ve swallowed so much Kool-Aid that any change in their diet would kill them.”

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**Religious Fundamentalists Ruin First Amendment, Build American Empire:** On August 24, 2006, former Democratic Senator and presidential candidate Gary Hart lamented both the dreaded neoconservative crusade in Iraq and the ideological selection of judges, tying them together into a vision of neocon religious imperialism:

The unprecedented attempt to make the administration of justice the instrument of ideology is incompatible with the Constitution of the Republic whose flag we salute. And, of course, the Republican party has been imaginative and innovative in its exploitation of religious sentiments. The unprecedented submission of social policy, and foreign policy in the Middle East, to religious fundamentalists violates the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and has weakened America in the world.

The army, the courts, and religion. The keys to the creation of the American Empire.

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**Ann Coulter and 'Overtly Patriotic' Americans Are Hateful Filth-Spewers:** Best-selling fiction writer Jane Smiley, who decried "the unteachable ignorance of the red states" on Slate.com after John Kerry lost in 2004, brought those views to the Huffington Post as well. Smiley hated conservative author and columnist Ann Coulter so much that she attempted to write a blog post on July 7, 2006, that attacked her, without once ever naming her. The blog's commenters still scolded her for giving Coulter the time of day. Smiley wasn't just attacking Coulter, but the ignorance and hatred of patriotic Americans in general:

American history is filled with people who have used hateful words to enrich themselves and to destroy others who were quite often weaker or more vulnerable than themselves. On every middle school playground in America, right now, some bully is tormenting some other, weaker child out of the sight of the adults, and some of the other children are egging him on, and still other children are watching from the sidelines. It's as American as apple pie. As she [Coulter] demonstrates with the filth she spews out of her mouth and her pen, Americans aren't nice or decent people, and conservative, overtly patriotic Americans are even less decent and less nice. They do harm, and they like to do harm, just as she likes to do harm, and they even expect to profit from the harm they do....

Americans, true patriotic red, white, and blue Americans like hate. They feel comfortable with it and always have. Over the years, they've hated the Irish, the Italians, black people, foreigners of all kinds, Catholics, Chinese workers on the railroad, Jews, Hispanics, gays, fans of the White Sox - the list is as long as your arm. And, of course, it makes any decent American uncomfortable, but "real" Americans are beyond shame - they are so ignorant and poorly brought up and fearful and pandered to by haters in the media that they don't even hear themselves disgorging sewage from their mouths, they don't see the ignorant, vicious looks on their faces, they don't hear the stupidity of their own laughter. Every time she [Coulter] opens her mouth, she poses a test, and every customer who buys her book fails that test. Every show that puts her on the airwaves fails, too. She's not the only one - there are others on radio and TV who pose the same test, but she's the craziest one. The test is a test of humanity. How low can you go? What sort of vileness it is that you

enjoy? How base are your motives? How little shame do you have? And what does that say about America?

### ***Lesser Known, But Just As Outrageous Bloggers***

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Not every official Huffington Post blogger is a celebrity toasted by the leftist elites. Many of Arianna's cast of hate-speech specialists aren't household names, but their writings are still unforgettably noxious.

**Adolf Hitler, Better Than Bush?** On June 20, 2007, HuffPost blogger Peter Mehlman, a former *Washington Post* sports reporter and *Seinfeld* script writer, baldly declared that Adolf Hitler was a better man than President George Bush, because even though he tried to eliminate the Jews, at least he meant well.

So now we're six and a half years into Bush and everyone from Helen Thomas on down is declaring him the worst president ever. What no one is saying is the one overarching reason he's the worst: the Bush administration is the first that doesn't even mean well....

You could argue that even the world's worst fascist dictators at least meant well. They honestly thought [they] were doing good things for their countries by suppressing blacks/eliminating Jews/eradicating free enterprise/repressing individual thought/killing off rivals/invading neighbors, etc....Bush set a new precedent. He came into office with the attitude of 'I'm so tired of the public good. What about my good? What about my rich friends' good?'"

How can anyone not see it? It's not that their policies have been misguided or haven't played out right. They. Don't. Even. Mean. Well.

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**Tony Snow Deserves Cancer, Thanks to His Daily Lying for Dictator Bush:** In a March 27, 2007 post that was later pulled "at the request of the author," gay San Francisco radio talk show host Charles Karel Bouley wrote cancer comes naturally to lying conservatives:

I hear about Tony Snow and say to myself, well, stand up every day, lie to the American people at the behest of your dictator-esque boss and well, how could a cancer NOT grow in you. Work for Fox News, spinning the truth in to a billion knots and how can your gut not rot? I know, it's terrible. I admit it. I don't wish anyone harm, even Tony Snow. And I do hope he recovers or at least does what he feels is best and surrounds himself with friends and family for his journey. But in the back of my head there's Justin Timberlake's "What goes around, goes around, comes around, comes all the way back around, ya."

This is a trend with Bouley, who upon learning of Ronald Reagan's death in 2004, played the song "Ding Dong! The Witch Is Dead!" on his weekend radio show on KGO. He also boasted of decrying Catholicism on the air as an "archaic cult" that "should be

retired like the monarchy in England” on the occasion of Pope John Paul’s death. That record of insensitivity apparently led Arianna Huffington to sign him up.

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**Crypto-Fascist Puppetmaster Cheney and Sadistic Alcoholic Bush:** On August 14, 2006, author Larry Beinhart wrote a post titled “Americans With Disabilities: The Reality-Challenged,” filled the Internet with more of the usual liberal arrogance that truly smart people with a grip on reality would have never gone to war in Iraq. He claimed he has discovered an important insight:

Even if you think of Cheney as an evil, authoritarian, crypto-fascist puppet master, or if you think of Bush as a smiling, dry alcoholic with sadistic tendencies, the question remains, why would they pursue policies that were pretty obviously doomed to failure?...Whatever their ambitions are and however ruthless they are and however amoral we might think they are, surely, successes would have been better - for them - than failures...It’s not hard to be reality-challenged. The reality-challenged people are running the government. They convinced virtually all of our media that their view of the world was real. They got plenty of voters to vote for them. It was a disability that crossed party lines. Nobody stood up for reality. We’ve had to wait for reality to stand up for itself. Which it’s doing.

Beinhart later explained to the blog NewsBusters.org that he used these terms for Bush and Cheney because they would be understood and accepted by Huffington Post readers. That sounds like a safe assumption. If he’d had more space, he added, he would have provided footnotes from books that offered solid proof of those harsh terms.

Beinhart continued the sadistic-Bush line in an April 4, 2007 post wondering about whether President Bush has a normal sex life:

Did he truly become monogamous after his conversion experience? Are he and Laura sexually active? This is the most idle and baseless speculation, but she sure doesn’t look like they have a happy bedroom. If they don’t, what then is he doing? Who is he sleeping with? Does that influence foreign policy? Is he celibate, and that’s what’s driving him mad? If he’s looking at porn, is he using RNC computers instead of White House ones, so there will be no record? The psychological and psychiatric portraits of Bush that I’ve read, usually say that he is sadistic. Is that manifest in his sex life?

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**Republicans Are Psychotic, or Mentally Disabled:** After the Democratic takeover of Congress in the 2006 elections, Democratic strategist Cliff Schecter was joyful enough to suggest that mental illness is a common Republican trait. His headline on November 29, 2006 was a grabber: “Are You Psychotic? Because Empirically That Makes You Susceptible To Being A Republican.” Schecter revealed that this supposedly scientific nugget emerged

as part of an “advocacy project designed to encourage mentally ill patients to vote.” They must have changed their minds:

It seems that there’s a relationship between the level of one’s psychosis and his/her support for President Bush (hint: it’s not inverse). I know, try to act surprised. In fact, this isn’t just speculation or hyperbole (not that there’s anything wrong with that), but an actual psychological study conducted in Connecticut (wonder if they tested Lieberman/Shays voters?).

It appears according to a study by Christopher Lohse, a social work master’s student at Southern Connecticut University, that there is a direct link between mental illness and support for President Bush. Lohse’s study is based on a survey of 69 psychiatric outpatients in three Connecticut locations during the 2004 election.

Lohse’s research is supported by SCSU professor Jaak Rakfeldt and statistician Misty Ginacola. There seems to be a strong correlation between psychotic persons and their presidential support for Bush. “Our study shows that psychotic patients prefer an authoritative leader,” says Lohse. “If your world is very mixed up, there’s something comforting about someone telling you, ‘This is how it is going to be.’”

This was a theme with Schechter, who also wrote on July 13, 2007 that “The NRA Must Go Down,” suggesting they were all mentally disabled, “men with an extra-Y chromosome lodged in their cerebral cortex.” They were not just disabled, but evil and pro-terrorist:

The NRA, with the money at their disposal and their willingness to do anything to win, with an almost gleeful expression as they lessen the security of the American people, are bar none one of the most evil of these groups in the country....today it is even more important as the NRA fights to ensure every terrorist, criminal, child or mentally imbalanced person has access to an AK.

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**Too Far Down the Road Toward Bush-Cheney Totalitarianism:** On October 23, 2006, Lyn Davis Lear, the third wife of liberal Hollywood TV legend Norman Lear, passed along the latest nuggets of bile from Gore Vidal:

When I asked Gore Vidal at dinner why the White House seemed so serene and at ease about the vote, he replied that, this time around, the Bush-Cheney henchmen could simply call on martial law. He glumly noted that we are so far down the road toward totalitarianism that, even if Democrats do win back the Congress, it would take at least two generations before the last six years of damage to the nation could be reversed. Gore frankly despaired that any amount of time could ever return the country to where and what it previously was.

**Believers in “Dictator Christ” Want Dictator Popes or Presidents:** The Huffington Post also brings a strange leftist take to Christianity. Jim Rigby, a pastor at St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church in Austin, penned a head-turning post titled “Christians Who Want Democracy Must Stop Bowing to a Dictator Christ.” In it, Rigby strangely claimed “The real Jesus was born illegitimately. He called himself ‘the human one.’ Just like Buddha, his authority came from truth, not power.”

Rigby despaired that, “Whether or not we can change America in time to avoid a political and ecological apocalypse, it is never too late to do the right thing. All of us can begin to plant seeds of a better future for our children’s children. For Christians today, that means suffering the consequences of refusing to bow to the dictator Christ of this culture.” Here’s more of Rigby’s ravings:

Whereas American theology was born out of a hope for democracy, much of it is wedded to a picture of Christ as a benevolent dictator. Should we be surprised that a hierarchical cosmology would produce hierarchical churches and nations? Should we be surprised that religious nations that picture Christ as a loving dictator have produced conquistadors, inquisitors and crusaders? What else could they produce? As the tree is, so shall be the fruit.

The word “Lord” was not in the original Bible. It is an English word from feudal times. Whereas the Greek word “kurios” had a range of meanings, from a title of respect, to a title of leadership, to a name for the sacred, the English translation “Lord” refers specifically to a male European land baron. Many people have softened that interpretation in their own minds, but in times of great stress, such nuance falls away and many Christians seek a white male king. He may be called “Pope”, he may be called “the decider President,” he may be called “televangelist,” but the title only masks what he is, a benevolent (or not so benevolent) dictator.

...To picture God in terms of power is also one of the great bait and switch gimmicks of all time. People within the power hierarchy proclaim that God is the ultimate authority, and then appoint themselves as God’s interpreters and enforcers. They are God’s humble bullies. It has been one of the most successful con games of all time.

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**Only ‘Glaze-Eyed Pod-Women’ Oppose Abortion on the Dirt Steppe:** Former *Time* writer Nina Burleigh – the woman infamous for expressing her willingness to give Bill Clinton oral sex “just to thank him for keeping abortion legal” – thoroughly denounced women on the pro-life side of the divide as South Dakota considered a *Roe vs. Wade*-scrubbing abortion ban in 2005. Out of her blue-state New York bubble, Burleigh inquired like an anthropologist: “What is it about South Dakota that makes men want so badly to breed? Is the loneliness of the prairie and the vast dirt emptiness of the Black Hills so profoundly affecting that only the idea of more brand-new babies can relieve it?”

To Burleigh, the strange land of South Dakota was populated by an alien people, as she recalled observing the odd-looking pro-life crowd on an earlier visit with presidential candidate Pat Buchanan:

American Gothic-styled, grim-faced men in blue overalls flanked by pairs or trios of women in long floral dresses, a local polygamist sect, apparently. These glaze-eyed, pod-women had been allowed to make the trip to the airport that afternoon to see and hear Pat, in what was surely their only voyage off the dirt vista of the frozen American steppe since their last trip to the hospital delivery room.

Burleigh concluded with her plans to help the women there who still believe in destroying their babies:

If the United States Supreme Court picks up the Dakota gauntlet and puts the United States back on equal footing with Catholic Ireland and Taliban Afghanistan, so that states are allowed to criminalize what we now consider a right, I'll put the first \$100 into a fund that for starters, would buy the dwindling number of women in South Dakota plane tickets to states that may still respect their rights.

### ***Conclusion: When Will the Media Bring Scrutiny to This Mud Pit?***

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Arianna Huffington's blog was celebrated by liberals from the moment it was born two years ago. After a time as a "compassionate conservative" guru to Newt Gingrich in the mid-1990s, the former Mrs. Huffington followed figures like David Brock on a familiar path to sudden discovery and celebration by the liberal media elites by utterly rejecting everything remotely right-wing. The media coverage warmed up. In a cover story by art critic Robert Hughes in *Time* magazine, Gingrich and Huffington were denounced in tandem: "This is the guy who hates the '60s but reincarnates them in his 40-acres-and-a-laptop Utopianism; who thinks kitsch 'futurologists' like Alvin and Heidi Toffler are gurus and that a fund-raising cultist like Arianna Huffington is an intellectual."

But 11 years later, spurred by her blog, *Time* named her one of the Top 100 "most influential people on the planet" - honored with a tribute to her conversion penned by her friend Al Franken, who claimed all the credit: "No doubt because of my persuasive prowess and Arianna's intellectual openness, she switched, becoming a lefty. With her indefatigable persistence, resourcefulness and good humor, Arianna, 55, has gone from ambitious project to ambitious project with varying degrees of success, finding herself the proprietor of the widely read, hugely influential liberal blog Huffington Post. None of this would have happened were it not for me."

Top TV news executives and newspaper and magazine editors and publishers often proclaim in the public square that the "mainstream media" exist to offer the citizenry a sober and thoughtful take on politics, something more urbane and sophisticated than those distasteful ad hominem rants on blogs and talk radio. The media's celebration of The

Huffington Post as an admirable sort of venture-capital Blog Incorporated of the American left betrays that those alleged media guardians of civility often enjoy a harsh political barb as much as anyone – especially when they come at the expense of Republicans and conservatives.

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