

# Bill O'Reilly Enters the 'Trump Spin Zone'



I wrote a piece last week on how some influential conservative pundits have been making excuses for (and even cheer-leading) Donald Trump's conduct in this presidential campaign, while holding the other GOP candidates to a much higher level of scrutiny. One name I left off that list was Fox News host, Bill O'Reilly.

It's not because I don't think that O'Reilly has been taking it easy on Trump in his interviews and commentary. On the contrary. I feel like he's been fairly accommodating – at least by the “no spin” standards he has long established as a hallmark of his highly successful brand. I just felt that (despite his friendship with Trump) he was putting forth a decent enough effort to challenge the GOP front runner on his provocative rhetoric. Thus, I wasn't comfortable lumping him in with the others.

After listening to him on his show following last night's GOP debate, however, I've decidedly changed my mind. December 15, 2015 will go down as the day Bill O'Reilly closed the door on the *No Spin Zone*, and willfully entered the *Trump Spin Zone* – a place where shameless, political dishonesty and demagoguery are not only acceptable, but also admired. The display put forth was highly uncharacteristic and unexpected of a man who has presented himself for years as straight shooter and a culture warrior. So much so, that Mr. O'Reilly might have quite a bit of trouble rebounding from the incident.

Last night's special airing of *The O'Reilly Factor* featured several guests who were brought on for some post-debate analysis. One of them was syndicated columnist and *Fox News* mainstay, Charles Krauthammer. Krauthammer's conversation with O'Reilly started out fairly uneventful, but that changed when the topic turned to a debate exchange between Donald Trump and Rand Paul.

A debate clip was aired featuring Paul criticizing Trump's proposed anti-terror plan of killing the families of terrorists. Trump's response to Paul was, "So, they can kill us, but we can't kill them?"

"I thought that was a pretty good comeback by Trump," said O'Reilly, commenting on the clip. "What do you think?"

"A pretty good comeback by Trump?" Krauthammer confusedly asked. "On the killing of the brothers and the sisters and the children of terrorists?"

"Yeah, he [Trump] just ignored it," said O'Reilly.

Krauthammer aptly pointed out that Trump had *not* ignored the question, and described Trump's answer of "*they can kill us, but we can't kill them*" as nonsensical.

O'Reilly worked to clarify Trump's position, saying, "You know, Trump never goes and says, '*I'm going to kill the families members.*' He says, '*I'm going to take them out, or treat them rough.*' You know what I'm talking about."

An astonished Krauthammer responded with, "No, I *don't* know what you're talking about. What does '*I'm going to take them out*' mean?"

O'Reilly explained to Krauthammer: "It's designed to get votes. It's designed to get people emotionally allied with him. That's what it's designed to do. You know that."

At that point, Krauthammer felt that O'Reilly needed to a

reminder of what his own “no spin” mantra meant. “Bill, you’re in the business of saying words on television, and writing them. The intent is to convey an idea or a thought. Either you believe that or you don’t. I don’t care what the motivation is – *that I want to elicit an emotion*. He [Trump] says this stuff. *Take them out*. What does that mean? So he was asked about that. He was asked specifically by the moderator: *Do you want to kill them?*”

O’Reilly wasn’t budging. “Do you believe that Donald Trump would murder people, if he were president of the United States?”

“If he doesn’t want to, why would he say it?” Krauthammer asked.

O’Reilly answered, “Because he wants votes. He’s doing all of this. It’s theater to get votes. That’s what he’s doing.”

*Note: I’ve put together a partial transcript below to detail the rest of the back and forth, eliminating only some brief sidebar remarks and some cross-talk that was hard to follow:*

**Krauthammer:** “So you’re saying this is a candidate for the presidency of the United States, talking to the American people and the world, saying x, y, and z...and that the words he says are *meaningless*? I have no idea what he would do as president. All I have to go on is what he says.”

**O’Reilly:** “He wants to win. And he’s going to say, like almost every other politician... He’s going to say whatever he thinks is going to put him over the top to win. But I’m not justifying it. I’m explaining it. And so, people can make their own minds on whether you want to vote for a guy like that, or you don’t. But he’s running as a rogue candidate. He’s getting people whipped up so that they will like him because their emotion and his emotion coincide.”

(Sidebar discussion.)

**O'Reilly:** "It's almost a brilliant strategy. It's almost brilliant, if all you want to do is win. If all you want to do is win, it's brilliant, because he [Trump] marginalizes everybody else around him, because he's so provocative, and tapping into the fear and anger that is pervasive among the Republican adherence. It's brilliant."

**Krauthammer:** "If you're telling me that demagoguery, untethered to the meanings of the words being used, can be effective... Well, there's a long history in humankind of that kind of demagoguery working. Do you *approve* of it?"

(Keep in mind that this is Bill O'Reilly, a man who has built an entire career off of demanding accountability for the words and actions of powerful people in our country.)

**O'Reilly:** "Do I approve it? I can't really say whether I approve of it or not."

**Krauthammer:** "As an American – as a citizen – do you think it's a *good* thing?"

**O'Reilly:** "I think what Donald Trump is doing is both good and bad. In the sense that he is destroying a corrupt system, it's good. And it's bad in the sense that he goes overboard – that he goes too far. But our system is corrupt, and people know it. He's destroying it."

**Krauthammer:** "And the cure for corruption is to say things that you are admitting he doesn't really mean?"

**O'Reilly:** "I don't think he... Some of it he means."

**Krauthammer:** "That's the way he goes after a corrupt system?"

**O'Reilly:** "He's going to build a wall. He's not going to be able to deport people, but he doesn't care, because that's what he *wants* to do. He's not going to be able to ban Muslims, but he doesn't care, because that's what he *wants* to do. Look. I don't approve of *all* of this. But I'm just telling you that

its a brilliant strategy, and he's winning with it."

**Krauthammer:** "Look. There have been a lot of brilliant strategists in the past, and many of who have succeeded, but it doesn't mean that one has to accept it as the only way to go after a corrupt system."

(Some brief back and forth, with Krauthammer pointing out that Ted Cruz also talks about there being a *corrupt system*, without suggesting we kill terrorists' families.)

**O'Reilly:** "And that's what you have to evaluate. Do you want Ted Cruz, who's not as extreme as Donald Trump, but he's running as a conservative. But I'll tell you this: It's corrupt, Charles. The whole damned system is corrupt. And Trump is blowing it up. You get the last word."

**Krauthammer:** "I'm not arguing here that the system is not a corrupt system. I'm only arguing that demagoguery works... That when someone says things that *you* admit he doesn't mean, but is doing it entirely for effect, that one ought to go back and say, '*Well that's just politics.*' It *is* politics, that's true. And it's done to some *extent* by other politicians, but I think it ought to be called out for what it is: Demagoguery. And unless you're going to stand behind what you say, and say 'I mean it'... It's rather surprising that you would think it's perfectly okay."

**O'Reilly:** "I don't say it's perfectly okay. I say it's a brilliant strategy. I say that there's some worthiness to exposing a corrupt system. I have been very tough on Donald Trump and you know it...when I've interviewed him. I've told him flat out he's not going to be able to deport people, in mass, an he's not going to be able to ban Muslims from the United States. He's not going to be able to do it. Alright? Because the legal system would prevent that. I've told him that. But on the other hand, I know what he's doing, and what he's doing is shaking everything up, and maybe these people...something

good will come out of it, because we can't just keep going the way we're going, Charles. We can't . This country's in desperate trouble."

(Segment ends with Krauthammer left essentially speechless.)

So there you have it. In the eyes of Bill O'Reilly (a longtime political watchdog and self-appointed seeker of justice), it's now okay for politicians to engage in blatant dishonesty and demagoguery to achieve power, as long as the motivation is that person's perception of *the greater good*.

This is precisely the type of corrosive, dishonest conduct O'Reilly has (for years) prided himself on exposing and aggressively condemning on national television. And by doing an about-face now, in order to condone (and even promote) Trump's behavior, isn't he guilty of not only shameless hypocrisy, but a level of cronyism so significant that he has called into question his very authority to present himself as an honest broker of news?

*Special Report's* Bret Baier seemed just as taken back by O'Reilly's remarks as I was, and he challenged the host's stance (as Bernie Goldberg did as well) later in the show:

**Baier:** "I listened to your conversation with Charles earlier, and what you were saying was that Trump is willfully misleading on a couple of key issues. And he's trying to fire people up to get votes – to get in office. But he knows...he knows...that those things are not going to happen..."

**O'Reilly:** "Here's the deal. He's not willfully misleading, because he *wants* it to happen. He *wants* it to happen."

**Baier:** "But he *knows* it's not going to."



For a limited time, John A. Daly's thriller FROM A DEAD SLEEP is on sale for only \$1.99!

**O'Reilly:** "I don't think he intellectualizes to that degree. And I've talked to him – we have him on tomorrow. He's going to be here tomorrow, okay? And I've talked to him, and you've seen the interviews. And I've said you can't deport 11 million people. The courts will stop you. And his reply is, '*No they won't,*' and then he leaves the room. You're not going to get any more than that. So what he's doing in saying, '*Look, it's enough for me to voice what Americans want, and if it doesn't happen down the lane, it's not my fault. It's the corrupt system's fault.*'"

In other words, according to Bill O'Reilly, when Trump lies, it's not *really* a lie because Trump *wants* that lie to be true.

Are you as confused as I am? And have you *ever* seen O'Reilly go to such lengths to spin (yes, *spin*) for any public figure (let alone a politician), as he did for Trump?

The truth is that O'Reilly deeply degraded himself last night, and it was a shame to watch. In addition to the hypocrisy, any sense of objectivity he's tried to bring to his coverage of this presidential race was essentially forfeited.

I hope whatever personal relationship he has with Trump was worth it.

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# Listen Up, O'Reilly

There are only two daily shows I watch on Fox. The first is Bret Baier's "Special Report." The other is Bill O'Reilly's "The Factor." Because I record everything I watch, I am able to fast-forward through the commercials on Baier's show. When it comes to O'Reilly, I will often fast-forward not only through his commercials, but through segments in which Bob Beckel, Leslie Marshall, Alan Colmes, Geraldo Rivera, Juan Williams, Lis Wiehl, Kimberly Guilfoyle and/or Marc Lamont Hill, appear. Some nights, I can fly through the entire hour in about eight or nine minutes. In fact, if it weren't for Bernie Goldberg, Charles Krauthammer, Megyn Kelly, Lou Dobbs and, to a lesser degree, Dennis Miller, I wouldn't tune in at all.

A while back, I got caught up in watching O'Reilly get fired up over same-sex marriages. One night, he claimed that too many people who opposed them did so for no other reason than their religious beliefs, and he didn't think that "Bible-thumpers" were in a position to persuade those who disagreed with them. I had to concede his point. After all, if people weren't religious, it stood to reason that they wouldn't be swayed by arguments based on gospel.

However, I was shocked by his reference to Bible-thumpers. And so was Laura Ingraham, who appeared as a guest on his show the following evening. Viewers must have thought O'Reilly's head was going to explode. He kept shouting her down each time she merely tried to explain that Bible-thumper was a demeaning term. Frankly, I half-expected her to walk off. But I guess she enjoys the perk of occasionally sitting in for O'Reilly too much to offend the blowhard. So she sat there and allowed him to treat her like an obnoxious brat.



Making things even worse was his denying that he had used the term, but had merely said, "Bible-thumping." I waited in vain for Ms. Ingraham to ask him who it is exactly who engages in Bible-thumping if not Bible-thumpers.

That evening, I sent him an email. I didn't really expect him to post it; after all, he had never posted any of my other messages, even though I do try to make them pithy. For the longest time, in fact, I've written them for no other reason than to share them with friends.

I wrote: "However you may have intended it, 'Bible thumper' is a derogatory term for a Christian, especially a fundamentalist or evangelical. You might as well have referred to religious nutburgers. Also, why would you urge letter writers to The Factor, as you did tonight, to not be 'prescient.' The word, after all, refers to someone possessing foresight."

As I assumed, my note wasn't posted, so now I'm once again sharing it with friends.

Like many people, I assumed that the problem with American politics was that most politicians are ex-lawyers. I figured that such was not the case in earlier times. Was I ever wrong! Although Washington and Jefferson were not members of the legal profession, 25 of the 43 presidents were, including John Adams, John Quincy Adams, Madison, Monroe and Van Buren.

The only conclusions I could draw from the list was that we've done reasonably well with former members of the military, if we limit it to the likes of Washington, Teddy Roosevelt, Eisenhower, Truman and Kennedy; and actors, if we limit it to professionals, such as Ronald Reagan, and not to such rank amateurs as LBJ, Nixon, Carter, Clinton and Obama.

Something I don't understand is how it is that welfare reform was passed back in the mid- 90s, but today we have 47 million people getting food stamps and another 14 million collecting disability checks. And how is it that just a few years ago,

unless I was hallucinating, Congress banned earmarks, but the relief bill for the victims of Hurricane Sandy was held up because so many legislators had added earmarks totaling untold millions of dollars in pet projects?

Also, how is it, I find myself wondering, that when their guy is in the White House, Democrats will spend trillions of tax dollars successfully pursuing the votes of women, blacks and illegal aliens, whereas Republicans will squander only slightly less money, but wind up buying no votes at all? Which reminds me of a question someone recently sent me: What's the difference between genius and stupidity? Answer: There's a limit to genius.

To bolster his argument that the Sequester would wreak financial havoc with the economy, Obama announced he is taking a five percent cut in his salary. That means that instead of receiving \$33,333 on the first of every month, he will only receive \$31,666. I, for one, hope that doesn't mean that Michelle will have to start wearing last week's dresses.

As symbolic acts go, you have to admit it's pretty lame. I mean, does Obama even pay for his own golf balls? He certainly didn't pay the freight to fly out here to California to co-host a recent DNC fund-raising event with Nancy Pelosi. I'm betting we even have to pay for those ice cream cones he's always noshing on when he's vacationing on Martha's Vineyard.

The biggest laugh Obama has handed me recently wasn't, as you may have guessed, his sinking just two of the 22 shots he took, trying to show off for the kids on Easter Sunday. Rather, it was his announcement that he wants to teach America's youth how to budget responsibly.

Is the man so completely oblivious that he doesn't realize that with his cavalier approach to a \$17 trillion national debt and an annual trillion dollar deficit, it would make far more sense if he announced he was going to teach our young

people how to shoot baskets?

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## A Trashy Society

There was a recent study of the 50 states that determined that the five freest were North and South Dakota, Tennessee, New Hampshire and Oklahoma; the least free were Rhode Island, Hawaii, New Jersey, California and New York.

The results shouldn't be too surprising. The freest, after all, tend to be more conservative, the least free are all liberal. That stands to reason when you see how much leftists relish bureaucratic regulations and regularly elect nannies such as California's Jerry Brown and New York's Andrew Cuomo and Michael Bloomberg.

It occurred to me that even though I don't watch Jay Leno, Jimmy Kimmel and David Letterman, I don't read the trashy magazines or tune in to "The View" or Ellen DeGeneres, I am all too aware of people like Paris Hilton, Justin Bieber, Lindsay Lohan, Madonna and the 4,000 women known collectively as the Kardashians. It's as if all this vile protoplasm were floating in the air, and no matter how hard you try, you can't avoid sucking them in like human smog.

In the old days, movie stars and singers hired publicity agents. They paid good money to get their names and pictures in the press in order to promote their careers and enhance their images. Thus, nymphos, drunks and drug addicts, would be sold to the gullible public as if the next logical step in their lives wouldn't be Oscars and hit records, but canonization as saints.

One of the few celebrities who was an exception was Frank Sinatra, who paid an expensive flack to keep his name out of the press. Even a guy who liked to play up his connection to Mafia dons didn't want it to be headline fodder every time he sucker-punched some shrimp or had his thuggish bodyguards put some guy in the hospital.

But how the times have changed! Now every two-bit schnook can't wait to go on TV and confess all. Instead of seeking atonement through private confession to a priest, these bottom-feeders seek out one of those aging sob sisters, like Barbara Walters, Diane Sawyer or Oprah Winfrey, while 500 pinheads in the studio audience mindlessly applaud, and the viler the confessions, the louder the applause.

Whenever I see someone like Bill O'Reilly get dewy-eyed over Abe Lincoln, I wonder why. I know the 16th president has been passed down to us as a humble log-splitter who was killed during a valiant attempt to end slavery. But that doesn't quite mesh with the fact that he only freed the slaves in the Confederacy, not those in the Union states. I also know that he didn't care for black people and urged the freed ones to self-deport to Liberia.

On top of all that, although his fable tells of his walking five miles in the snow to school and five miles home, uphill in both directions, and being a poor, but honest, lawyer, he was in fact constantly running for one political office or another. In the meantime, he served as a very wealthy mouthpiece for the railroad barons, who, in turn, financed his successful run for the presidency.

Then there was also the blatant hypocrisy of his "malice toward none, with charity to all" malarkey, while constantly urging his generals to wage bloody havoc on women and children, burning down homes and farms, all the while waging a war that left 620,000 Americans dead. What's worse, his overriding motive was to make it possible for the North to

continue punishing the South with tariffs that protected the producers of steel and textiles, while ruining those who raised and exported cotton and other farm products.

To me, the greatest of our presidents was without question George Washington. Not only had he commanded the Army that defeated the mighty English forces, but he both rejected the crown and was probably the last president who couldn't wait to leave the presidency and return home.

George ("First in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen") Washington was to American politics what Babe Ruth was to baseball. Ruth, while with the Boston Red Sox, was one of the greatest pitchers in the game. Then he went to the New York Yankees and became the game's all-time greatest hitter.

One of the worst results of the Lincoln fable was that, to this day, politicians never stop bragging about how poor they started out. Did even a single day go by in 2012 when Joe Biden or Rick Santorum didn't remind us of their humble origins? But neither, you may have noticed, bothered mentioning how wealthy they had become in the guise of being public servants.

Another subject of popular fairy tales are Indians, or Native Americans, as they're referred to in certain effete circles. Although there were some peaceful tribes back in the day, don't believe anyone who tells you that it was white men who introduced torture and genocide to the noble savages. Many of them even engaged in cannibalism.

These days, they have added something new and shameful to their resume. It's called disenrollment. That is a process whereby tribal leaders get to decide who does and who doesn't have a legitimate claim to tribal identity. This outrageous activity owes its origin to the success of Indian casinos.

The way it works is that the fewer members of the tribe, the

bigger the payouts to those who survive these purges. What's more, because the tribal leaders get to make these decisions unilaterally, there can be no appeal to state or federal courts. I guess some people would take heart from the fact that in this way, at least, the Indians have finally learned the ways of the white man.

Finally, although Bob Beckel, who, for some unfathomable reason has become the darling of Fox News, should be commended for being a recovering alcoholic, I have to confess that every time I see him blathering away on "The Five" or "The Factor," I feel as if *I'm* being driven to drink.

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## **Are We Becoming A Nation of Thin-Skinned Whiners?**

☒ America is getting soft and here's why. Everyday, I see and read about more complainers, cry-babies, and thin-skinned whiners. Whatever happened to the old adage, "sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never harm me"? It seems that, now, everyone is offended by something and everyone is willing to don a cap with a big "V" for "victim" on it. I don't get it.

Take, for example, President Obama. He's the biggest cry-baby of them all. Here's the most powerful man in the world and he's upset with a cable news network. How many snide remarks are we going to hear from him about Fox News? The fact that Fox News has more viewership than any other cable news network doesn't seem to mean anything to him. But why is that? Because, for example, The O'Reilly Factor, which I

watch every day, presents both sides of every issue and allows me to decide. O'Reilly asks tough questions, not like softball interviewers like the recent Steve Kroft interview of the President on 60 Minutes. Unlike Rachel Maddow and Chris Matthews who probably kneel in front of lighted candles, burning incense before an Obama bobble head figure before they go on the air, O'Reilly is rounding up commentators on the left and the right to discuss an issue.

And how about women? Women are easily offended by a lot of stuff. They're offended if a man holds a door for them, opens a car door, or offers to carry something. The latest outrage is directed at Enterprise Florida, a business organization that promotes Florida's job growth, for coming up with this logo:



Somehow the use of a "tie" is offensive. According to Pamela Rogan, the President of the Central Florida Chapter of National Association of Women Business Owners, the logo should've featured a briefcase or an iPhone instead of a necktie. Really? I'm wondering if Enterprise Florida is going to cave on this one. My guess – yes.

How about some Arab-American groups who were offended by a Super Bowl Coke commercial showing an Arab + camel + desert scene? Imam Ali Siddiqui, president of the Muslim Institute for Interfaith Studies said to NBC News, "The Coke commercial for the Super Ball is racist, portraying Arabs as backward and foolish camel jockeys, and they have no chance to win in the world."

And what about atheists who are offended at Christmas time and demand that Christmas trees be called holiday trees? Or taking "under God" out of the Pledge of Allegiance? Or being offended by teachers wearing religious symbols?

The older I get the more I'm convinced some people wake up in

the morning and say, “okay, what’s going to offend me today?” That’s got to be the reason behind Principal Verenice Gutierrez’s notion that PB&J sandwiches could hold racist connotations. What she has a problem with is the example of a peanut butter sandwich in classroom lessons. She says, “What about Somali or Hispanic students, who might not eat sandwiches? Another way would be to say, ‘Americans eat peanut butter and jelly, do you have anything like that?’ Let them tell you. Maybe they eat torta. Or pita.” So according to this educator, everything taught in schools must be cloaked in multi-cultural terms; forget the fact that this is America. I’m sure an American kid going to school in Mexico is given those options.

And we shouldn’t leave out Asian-Americans who were apparently offended by Miley Cyrus’ goofy photo:



This dopey photo is so offensive to some that in a lawsuit filed in Los Angeles, plaintiff Lucie J. Kim claims that each of the approximately one million Asian Pacific Islanders in L.A. County, is entitled to a minimum of \$4,000 for a civil-rights violation stemming from the photograph. The damages could exceed \$4 billion. I wonder if the Asian guy in the photo is standing in line for his \$4 grand.

I don’t get it, but if you do, God bless you.

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**Some Really Inconvenient**



# Truths

Barack Obama would like you to believe that it's white guys with assault weapons and NRA memberships that commit most of the murders in this country. But the truth, and he knows it, is that although whites comprise 67% of the population, Hispanics 16% and blacks, just 13%, blacks are responsible for roughly half the murders in America. The murder rate among blacks is eight times as high as among whites. Sadly, it is one area in which they truly overachieve.

But do you ever hear Obama, Biden, Bloomberg, Feinstein or Cuomo, mention it? Of course not. They would rather grab headlines by running their mouths off about guns with large magazines instead of urban punks with a lot of attitude, but no brains and even less compassion.

If we ever wanted to get serious about gun violence, we would send the military into places a lot more violent than the Middle East. I refer to Chicago, L.A., Philadelphia, Detroit and Houston. But even Bill Clinton, "the first black president," had to retreat from dealing with the black gangs in Somalia when he realized how badly it would play on CNN. It's one thing to be seen playing Lady Bountiful with other people's money in Haiti and quite another to deal with blacks the same way one would if they were white Croatians.

Frankly, what people do with their own money is their own business, but why an American would bother sending dough to Haiti when our physically and mentally wounded war veterans are going begging is beyond me. But I also can't begin to fathom why, at the same time we are going down the fiscal drain, we keep sending billions of dollars to the likes of Egypt, Russia, Jordan, the Sudan, Pakistan Iraq and to terrorist groups in Gaza. And why on earth are we sending hundreds of millions of dollars to Mexico when they not only refuse to shut down their side of the border, but recently

arrested and imprisoned an ex-U.S. Marine on trumped-up gun charges, and then ignored repeated calls from the State Department. They simply refused to spring the poor guy until Bill O'Reilly threatened to put a big hurt on Mexico's tourist industry. One has to suspect that if, instead of coddling the Mexican goons, Obama or Mrs. Clinton had threatened to cut off their annual bribe, it would have taken Mexico about four seconds to release Jon Hammar, not four months.

Getting back to guns for a minute, the number of accidental gun deaths in America averages around 1,500-a-year. The number of accidental deaths caused by physicians and hospitals is over 120,000. I leave it to you to decide which poses the greater danger, guns or healthcare providers.

I do think the NRA has gone about fighting those who would revoke the Second Amendment pretty much the same stupid way the U.S. has waged every war since 1945 – as if it were being conducted by the Three Stooges.

Traditionally, the NRA contributes a ton of money to politicians who support them and perhaps even more to defeating those who oppose them. Well, I happen to think the NRA is wasting its money by ignoring the PR battle it should be waging and winning. Instead of funding individual campaigns, they should be more concerned with public opinion. They should be running TV commercials featuring the actual men and women who have used guns to defend themselves and their families from violent criminals.

The way things are now, the other side simply waits for the next massacre. Then they troop out the survivors – people like James Brady or Gabby Giffords or the parents of the Newtown kids – and, thus, they inevitably win the battle on emotional, if not Constitutional, grounds.

But if the NRA would simply wise up, we would soon begin seeing the gun-toting mothers and fathers on TV, the folks you

never even hear about in the national media. They're the folks who didn't just wait around for the cops to draw chalk outlines of their dead bodies on the kitchen floor, but, instead, put their guns to the use for which they were bought and paid for.

Once they've won the hearts and minds of the American public, the NRA won't have to worry so much about whether the right person gets elected; the public will see to it.

Although God knows we already have too many laws on the books, one I would like to see enacted is that nobody who is injured or killed during the commission of a felony is entitled to sue. That would of course preclude his relatives from suing his intended victims. Think of it as an extension of the Good Samaritan Law.

Speaking of legislation, the 2011 Former Presidents Act provides Carter, Clinton and the two Bushes, with a \$3.7 million slush fund. The idea that our tax dollars are paying anything towards the upkeep of these millionaires is revolting. It doesn't get any better when you discover that Clinton uses a portion of this windfall to connect 10 TVs in his office to DirecTV. It doesn't seem like a stretch to imagine that he's regularly tuned in to "Busty Coeds Vs. Lusty Cheerleaders," "Sex Games Cancun: The Last Temptation of Hank" and "Hotel Erotica."

For a while, I figured it was a toss-up when it came to the most disgusting athlete in America. One day, being a baseball fan, I would think that it came down to Roger Clemons, Barry Bonds, Sammy Sosa or Mark McGwire. But then I'd see a list of all the illegitimate children sired by the over-paid goons who populate the NBA, and they'd fast break into the lead. But I kept overlooking Lance Armstrong. That was probably because the notion of considering a bike rider an athlete goes against everything Americans hold dear. It's no accident that he had to go to France to get anyone's attention in the first place.

Leave it to the French to get excited about a sport even duller and sillier than soccer.

In the good old days, when it was time to atone, people paid a visit to their priest or minister, or at least showed up at an AA meeting. Now they confess all to Oprah. Of course in Armstrong's case, he was less concerned with his soul than he was with his brand. Sponsors, a notoriously touchy bunch, don't usually want their product associated with a cheat and a liar, especially one who has spent the past decade viciously slandering anybody who dared question his integrity.

The real mystery to me is how anyone, particularly a schmuck with the looks and personality of an embalmer, could get that rich and famous riding a damn bicycle.

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