

# The Media Needs More Liberals Like Kirsten Powers

☒ Conservatives should feel pretty fortunate for outlets like FOX News, talk radio, and *new media* blogs. Without them, there really wouldn't be any mechanism in this country for combating the overwhelming problem of liberal bias in our news media. While these sources do indeed offer at least a tiny semblance of a counterbalance, the reality for those of us who truly long for a fair and honest media is that *fighting fire with fire* will not get us there.

Conservative partiality cannot conquer or even hope to evenly compete against liberal partiality. It can only prevent a complete shutout in the promotion of dueling viewpoints. The liberal establishment in our media is just too widespread, too engrained in our society, and way too comfortable in their harmonious bubble of like-minded thinkers.

Ultimately, ridding bias from the media as whole (or at least marginalizing it) requires a fundamental change from within – one that needs to start with a renewed respect from journalists for their own profession. If a strong majority of journalists legitimately respected the importance and responsibility of their role in a free, democratic society, it wouldn't make all that much of a difference if they were liberal-minded or conservative-minded. Sure, diversity of thoughts and different perspectives are important factors as well, but a serious sense of professionalism and discipline would lead members of the media to perform their jobs with integrity. And when they didn't, their bosses would be principled enough to reprimand them.

I'm not exactly making a groundbreaking point here. This is how journalism is *supposed* to work. In this day and age, however, it doesn't. There is a stunning lack of both self-

awareness and shame in our media right now, and it might just take brave individuals from within their own ranks to change things by publicly challenging their colleagues to get their acts together. After all, it's one thing for a conservative in the media to denounce liberal bias. It's quite another for liberal to do it.

Over the past few months, Kirsten Powers has proven to be one of those brave individuals.

Powers is a columnist and commentator for the Fox News Channel. Most FNC viewers are familiar with her, and many have probably disagreed strongly with the solidly liberal political views she's expressed over the years. I know I have. Unlike her colleagues on the left, however, she has distinguished herself by making known the personal exception she's taken to the mainstream media's over-the-top softball treatment of the Obama administration.

Commenting this week on Steve Kroft's *60 Minutes* interview with President Obama and Hillary Clinton on Sunday, in which Kroft chose to largely fawn over the Obama/Clinton relationship instead of challenging either on Benghazi or any other foreign policy issue, Powers said, "...it really was something you would expect from like the state-run media. You know, it was that kind of level of propaganda as far as I'm concerned."

When have you ever heard that kind of honest media criticism of the left *from* the left?

Last week, Michael Hastings (a reporter for *Rolling Stone* magazine) revealed that during the 2012 presidential campaign, reporters (himself included) chose not to ask President Obama tough questions. Hastings wrote in his new book: "That's the presence of Obama, even on the press corps, even on the people who follow him every day. When they're near him, they lose their minds sometimes. They start behaving in ways that are

juvenile and amateurish, and they swoon.”

Rather than trying to spin Hasting’s observations into a less incriminating explanation (like several on the left did), Powers remarked, “I think we need to hire some grown-ups to cover the president. This is not acceptable behavior...” She went on to say, “The purpose of a journalist is to hold people in power accountable. I know this is probably a surprise to some journalists today, but that’s actually what they’re supposed to be doing. They’re not supposed to be swooning.”

Amen.

Those weren’t the only harsh words Powers had for the presidential race coverage. Back in September, she stated, “This campaign season has been especially egregious in terms of them [the media] just ignoring things that are bad about President Obama and obsessing over things that are, you know, that Mitt Romney has done wrong.”

When weighing in on the media’s reaction to Mitt Romney’s response to the September attacks on U.S. embassies in the Middle East, she professed, “I mean, it is just absolutely utterly insane the way that they [the media] have elevated this... And the thing is, the outrage that has been expressed over the fact that Mitt Romney put out this statement has even overshadowed any kind of outrage that you would see over the fact that you have Islamic flags being hoisted over American embassies, the fact that an American ambassador is dead.”

Powers has been one of the media’s toughest critics on the coverage of the terrorist attack in Benghazi, regularly pointing out the media’s disinterest in following leads and asking tough questions because the answers would surely reflect poorly on President Obama. She’s also taken to task the numerous double-standards the media uses in their coverage of Republican politicians versus Democratic politicians.

Her take has been refreshing to listen to, and her decision to

voice her grievances on-air is significant. My hope is that her media colleagues on the left are taking note.

Now, I'm sure that even though Kirsten Powers is an unapologetic liberal and dishes plenty of criticism against the conservative media as well, she probably takes a tremendous amount of heat from her fellow lefties for merely being employed by Fox News. And I'm guessing that whenever she speaks out against liberal media bias, her email inbox fills up with angry rants from the *angry left*, accusing her of being a shill for Rupert Murdoch and Roger Ailes.

Those people, however, would be wrong. Powers has shown that she comes from an extremely rare breed of modern day liberals in the media that carries a deep pride in the media profession. She realizes how truly vital that profession is in our society, and she's rightly offended by her peers who do not take their responsibility seriously. Whether or not they share her political views is irrelevant to the job at hand.

This is how *all* journalists should be viewing their profession. So when one of them not only demonstrates that they *get it*, but also demands that their peers *get it* as well, they deserve some praise.

As a conservative, I have no problem saying that the media needs more liberals like Kirsten Powers. The country would be better off for it.