

Good riddance – Megan Kelly has cheapened journalism

I write this in exasperation at encountering news on the internet, television, and radio all about Megan Kelly moving from Fox News to NBC. Why is this news? On what basis is fame awarded to those who only read, announce, or chatter about the news made by other people who actually do something other than “observe” what others do and report or comment on it? Why, for the first time, have those whose role it is to report the “news,” become the “news”?

This particularly applies to Megan Kelly. She, and more and more other television “journalists,” think and act like they are the story; they are the celebrities; and those who actually make the news by doing things are just props for the “reporters” to put on a show in which the reporter is the star. For Kelly, as a “reporter,” its “all about her,” as the reporter, instead of who she is reporting on.

It wasn't always this way. Once upon a time many years ago, I was what is called “an award winning investigative reporter” for a large circulation newspaper in one the most corrupt urban areas of the country. Among other things, I wrote a series of more than twenty parts on corruption, drugs, gambling, bookie joints, whore houses, public housing and other corrupt “poverty programs” that made organized crime, government officials, and “poverty program pimps,” rich by payoffs and graft.

Death threats began after the first installment of the series appeared. By the third day, I was ordered into the managing editor's office. Two FBI agents informed me they believed the death threats were serious. Thereafter, although death threats continued as the series went on day after day, I had 24-hour FBI-supervised protection, where I went, they went. As I

slept, they guarded. A corrupt mayor and a number of other government figures ultimately went to prison for corruption. That was professional journalism, and I was proud to be a small part of it.

But that was a long time ago and far, far way from contemporary television broadcast journalism, epitomized by Megan Kelly. Today, purported professional journalist Megan Kelly has become a celebrity broadcast journalist whose career move is reported on endlessly by other "journalists" in a breathless worshipful manner that used to be reserved for teenage readers of fan magazines. "Will she or won't she?" "What will Megan do"? "Megan Kelly announces she will...! Provoking the question: Knowing how Megan Kelly has cheapened journalism, why should anyone care where she sells her soul?

This celebration of purported journalist Megan Kelly in endless purported "news reports" by other purported journalists takes place even as she almost nightly cheapens the profession of journalism.

Kelly has cheapened professional journalism by cheapening herself, to the present and future injury of other women who really are or want to be ethical professional journalists, but don't want to be hired, promoted, or judged on an "eye-candy" standard of sexual attractiveness, allure, or suggestiveness.

Consider: What is the lesson of Kelly's career actions for other women, especially young women, if they want to get ahead and be respected as a professional journalist ?

First, following the Kelly model, what a woman needs to do to get ahead in television journalism is to pretend to be a professional journalist but dress on television "news programs" like a high class call girl on her way to an assignation as soon as the broadcast ends.

And do such other things as Kelly has done to promote herself, such as: Going on the Howard Stern Show and chatting all

smiles with Dirty Howard about matters sexual. Giggle without objection as Kelly did when drooling Howard complimented her leeringly as “a great piece of ass.” Carry on with Howard as Kelly did in titillating banter about sexual acts and practices like a low class hooker being probed, so to speak, by Dirty Howard, and enjoying it. Really high class, professional journalist conduct by Kelley to get ahead.

Or, following the Kelly model, do a “come-and-get-it” soft-porn photo spread for GQ or similar magazine, as Kelly did, while simultaneously insisting all you want to be recognized for is your professionalism as a journalist and not as a woman trying to get ahead on her sexual attractiveness and attributes.

Most importantly, exploit your position, as Kelly did on Fox as its eye-candy news queen, to make yourself famous by doing something really cheap but self-promoting, as Kelly did in ambushing Donald Trump in the first presidential campaign debate with an accusation posing as a journalistic question regarding Trump being abusive of women by, inter alia, calling Rosie O’Donnell a “pig.” (That apparently is being abusive of women even if true about Rosie O’Donnell, at least to the degree that Rosie O’Donnell is one, although it isn’t clear that she “identifies” as one.)

Kelly gained fame by her cheap ambush of Trump, but by the same act she lost all credibility personally as an objective journalist, and cheapened the profession. But that doesn’t mean Kelly won’t get ahead at NBC, which, especially through MSNBC, has evidenced that it has even less journalistic integrity than Kelly, and will say or do anything if it is self-promoting, no matter how cheap.

In sum, Kelly has cheapened journalism by the way she has sought advancement by figuratively selling sex. There is a word for that when the sale is literal rather than figurative. That word sometimes fits when the sale, replete with come on,

remains figurative. That word, in my opinion, fits Megan Kelly, and fits the kind of “journalism” of which she is the exemplar.

Megan Kelly’s is not the kind of professional journalism that should be celebrated by “journalists” as “news” in story upon story about Meagan Kelly’s career change. Cheap is as cheap does, and Kelly does it cheap, indeed. All that needs be said of her are words that are ancient, but wise, and fitting for Megan Kelly: “Go, and sin no more.”

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