

# Turning Sheehan's Victory into Defeat

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Let's not underestimate what Cindy Sheehan has accomplished by her trip to Crawford. She tracked Bush down to his sage-brush redoubt, and sent him scuttling for the hills two weeks before his vacation was supposed to end.

When has that ever happened before? When has a private citizen ever chased a president from his lair?

Leaving Crawford was even a bigger mistake than sprinting past Sheehan in the presidential limo, which only showed how disconnected Bush is from the people who fight his wars. It just makes him look like he's a beaten man running away from his critics. His image is as sullied now as any time since he skedaddled from the "champagne unit" of the Texas National Guard and it's all because of Cindy Sheehan.

The Sheehan story has surprisingly morphed into a morality play; an updated version of David and Goliath, with the resolute Sheehan bringing down the giant with the mere force of her candor and her raw-boned stubbornness.

Good work, Cindy.

Direct-action is still an impressive tool when wielded by a pro like Sheehan. She was willing to take on the fire-ants and the August blaze to "hang the bell around the cat's neck"; and she did just that. Now, the cracks and fissures are showing up everywhere in Fortress Bush and George is being shadowed by protestors wherever Air-force 1 touches down.

Boy, momentum sure shifts quickly.

The American Research Group just released a poll that shows Bush's overall approval rating dithering at 36%, with a measly 33% thinking he's doing a good job on the economy. Bush is looking more and more like the guy who stumbled into the elevator shaft and hasn't hit the bottom yet. Another couple of weeks and the yellow-ribbon bumper-magnets will be stacking up at the landfill by the truckload.

Call me crazy, but I think the media had a lot to do with Bush's downward spiral. True, many in the mainstream pounded away relentlessly at Sheehan, but at least they gave her enough camera-time to send a laser into the Crawford White House. That wouldn't have happened a year ago. Last year they would have just passed her over like anyone else who protested the war.

Just think of how the tens of thousands of protestors who marched through the streets before the war were marginalized by the predictable coverage of the one woman in the

long-hooped skirt and the day-glow pulsating in front of the loud-speakers. This is how the media made the antiwar protestors look like anachronistic fools.

In large part the strategy worked; so what has changed?

Why are they so eager now to show the real face of suffering from Bush's war?

We already know that most of what the media conjures up as news is pure invention. Consider the Terry Schiavo story; a meaningless diversion that was only kept alive by training every available camera on a handful of teary-eyed fanatics assembled in front of a Florida hospice.

Was that news or just a calculated distraction?

The only way that the saga of one brain-dead woman can dominate the national dialogue for 3 weeks is if the networks make a concerted effort to shelve the real news and create a narrative full of pathos and suspense.

This, of course, is how the news is increasingly manufactured with no attention to informing the public of the political and economic realities that are shaping their lives. It is way that the sheeple are peacefully led to their corrals by the masters of perception management.

So, now we are supposed to believe that the media miraculously found its soul and wants to transmit the unvarnished truth to the American people?

Pu-leeese!

I'm not buying it.

What we're seeing in the Sheehan affair is the yawning chasm that has opened up between the elites who control the media and a large part of American industry. In essence, these men see the same thing that you and I do; a bunch of incompetent bunglers who have failed in everything they have set out to achieve. The lack of faith in the Bush administration is not limited to confirmed liberals who spend their time on Leftists web sites. The men at the top of the corporate food-chain are not fools. They understand failure and they know when to cut their losses. The Bush ship-o-state is rudderless and adrift and the media is just helping them to the nearest reef.

That doesn't mean that Bush is not still a formidable adversary. The boys in the administration have no intention of leaving and allowing some other administration to start snooping around 9-11, the Cheney energy papers, the Downing Street memos and the long litany of crimes perpetrated in the last 5 years. But, certainly, some of the Bush faithful have stepped off the boat and are looking for new leadership.

Don't get me wrong; none of the powerbrokers have given up on Iraq. That's why we see Kerry, Bill Richardson and the insufferable blowhard Joe Biden reemerging on the Sunday talk shows. These are the prospective "pro-war" candidates being primped and preened to replace Bush. Any one of them would trade-away their first-born for the swivel-chair in the Oval Office.

And, this is the great danger of Cindy Sheehan's victory, that it will be co-opted by the pro-war toadies in the Democratic Party and used to fuel their campaigns. If that happens, we've lost everything.

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