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SHOCK JOCKS: HATE SPEECH AND TALK RADIO

America's Ten Worst Hate Talkers and the Progressive Alternatives

By Rory O'Connor with Aaron Cutler

“Talk radio is one of America’s most popular and influential media formats. In his book, *Shock Jocks: Hate Speech and Talk Radio*, Rory O’Connor reports on the shocking number of top radio talk show hosts who regularly spout hate speech over our public airwaves. This intriguing, eye-opening and hugely important work is a must read account of the dangers of blurring opinion, journalism and entertainment -- at the expense of our democratic discourse and ideals.”

-- Walter Cronkite, American broadcast journalist icon

“Rory O’Connor and Aaron Cutler, in this admirable example of whistleblowing, do for talk radio in our time what Upton Sinclair and George Seldes did for the press in their time. They expose, in devastating detail, how our hallowed right of free speech has been crippled by right wing domination of the air waves. They carefully analyze the phenomenon of talk radio -- its origins, its enormous power, its pretensions, its covert and overt agendas . But they also present alternatives that could restore some semblance of fairness to a marketplace of ideas so far dominated by corporate and military interests.”

-- Howard Zinn, author

“There is too much talk -- imbecilic, often hateful talk -- on much of talk radio, as this provocative book demonstrates. O’Connor and Aaron Cutler deliver a lively, well deserved punch in the nose to these powerful bloviators.”

-- Ken Auletta, journalist and media expert

“Rory O’Connor is one of the smartest media guys around. He knows who’s spinning, who’s pandering, and who’s putting money in his own pocket at the expense of logic, reason, and the public good. O’Connor’s book is a devastating portrait of the avarice, cynicism, and psychopathology of one of the strangest media phenomena of our time: the shock jock.”

-- Michael Wolff, media critic of *Vanity Fair*

“Talk radio is running America. We have to deal with that problem.” -- Senator Trent Lott

The highly politicized, overly partisan and often factually challenged world of talk radio dominates a potent portion of America’s airwaves and provides huge profits to some of America’s biggest media companies.

Yet the dirty secret of talk radio’s success is the use of hate speech under the guise of free speech. Hate speech can lead to hate crimes and hate speech has no role on our public airwaves.

Noted media critic, film-maker, and blogger Rory O'Connor tackles the hate talk establishment. SHOCK JOCKS: HATE SPEECH AND TALK RADIO (AlterNet Books; June 2008; \$14.95) provides profiles of the ten worst shock jocks in America and documents how distorted talk radio is in the public dialogue due to the huge ideological imbalance in radio content and concentration in ownership.

We'll hear about Don Imus, Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, Michael Savage and their minions as they ratchet up their anti-gay, anti-women, anti-Arab language, under the guise of "not being politically correct." This environment leads to a climate that tolerates racist, sexist, homophobic and xenophobic attitudes and language -- making America a coarser and more dangerous place.

We'll also hear from the alternative -- the much smaller but growing universe of progressive talk radio personalities, its rising stars, and the attempt to organize and fund an antidote to "hate talk" radio.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

RORY O'CONNOR is a documentary filmmaker and journalist. Rory O'Connor is co-founder and president of the international media firm Globalvision, Inc, and Board Chair of The Global Center, an affiliated non-profit foundation. He is also Editorial Director of the social news network NewsTrust.net. A regular columnist for Alternet and MediaChannel, O'Connor also writes the popular "Media Is A Plural" blog, accessible at www.roryoconnor.org. His broadcast, film and print work has been honored with a George Polk Award, a Writer's Guild Award, a George Orwell Award, two Emmys, among other awards.

AARON CUTLER is a Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania native, attended Friends' Central School for 13 years before enrolling at Brown University. He is currently a senior double-majoring in English and Literary Arts, Brown's name for Creative Writing. Regardless of where he is or what he does next year, he will be sure to listen to conservative talk radio.

ABOUT THE BOOK

SHOCK JOCKS: Hate Speech and Talk Radio

By Rory O'Connor & Aaron Cutler

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AlterNet Books was created to bring our readers a deeper and more insightful analysis of the progressive issues that matter. Launched with *Young Dick Cheney: Great American*, AlterNet Books is a source of provocative thinking and high-quality writing. *Shock Jocks: Hate Speech and Talk Radio* is our second book. In the fall, we will be churning out three more books. Coming out just in time for the November elections, *Count My Vote: Getting Your Vote Right for 2008* outlines new voting technology developments, and will prepare the voting public to navigate a process that has proved disastrous in the past. *Water Consciousness: Everything You Need to Know to Protect the World's Most Precious Resource* is a comprehensive, solution-focused guide to the world's greatest environmental crisis. *The Illegal Job Scam: the Real Truth Behind Immigration Wars* offers a radically different vision of how progressives can approach the stalled immigration debate in America. Visit <https://alternet.org/books> today!