

**THE BLOG**

Coin-Laundry Chyrons

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Network bookers are feverishly planning for Hurricane Valerie. Just as the O.J. trial and the Iraq war proved to be cash cows for former prosecutors and retired brass, the expected Plame indictments will be a chance for talking heads to build brand equity and boost their speaking fees, not to mention frame the debate, peddle talking points and hijack the national narrative.

Some of the bloviators no doubt are right now cutting multi-appearance deals. And when their faces show up onscreen, their chyrons will magically launder their histories and motives, describing them as, say, MSNBC CONTRIBUTOR or FOX NEWS ANALYST, rather than as, you know, CONVICTED WATERGATE FELON, or FRIEND OF BOB NOVAK.

If Judy Miller could agree to let Scooter Libby mask his Wilson animus as a “former Hill staffer,” rather than being identified as a “high Administration official,” maybe it’s no biggie to offer notorious liars and partisan pit-bulls the imprimatur of journalistic credibility. After all, if Pat Buchanan, Joe Scarborough and John Kasich get to be called HOST, why shouldn’t the Rove and Libby surrogates about to belly up to the media trough be camouflaged as DEFENSE EXPERT or POLITICAL STRATEGIST?

On the other hand, perhaps the networks could use a little truth-in-labeling help from the netroots. When the Victoria Toensings and their ilk hit the screens in days ahead, any suggestions for the kind of full-disclosure chyrons that viewers might actually find useful?

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