

# BLOGGER IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER?

The NYT manages to understand that the Republicans went overboard with their attacks on Graeme Frost. But there's something else they don't seem to understand.

In recent days, Graeme and his family have been attacked by conservative **bloggers** and other critics of the Democrats' plan to expand the insurance program, known as S-chip.

[snip]

But Michelle Malkin, one of the **bloggers** who have strongly criticized the Frosts, insisted Republicans should hold their ground and not pull punches.

"The bottom line here is that this family has considerable assets," Ms. Malkin wrote in an e-mail message. "Maryland's S-chip program does not means-test. The refusal to do assets tests on federal health insurance programs is why federal entitlements are exploding and government keeps expanding. If Republicans don't have the guts to hold the line, they deserve to lose their seats."

As for accusations that bloggers were unfairly attacking a 12-year-old, Ms. Malkin wrote on her blog, "If you don't want questions, don't foist these children onto the public stage."  
[my emphasis]

You see, according to the NYT, if someone does something so far beyond the pale that all sane people would object, that person must be a blogger.

To be fair, the first known attack on the Frost

family came from a Freeper. And Michelle Malkin did use her blog, among other outlets, to attack the Frosts. And a lot of conservative bloggers piled on. So it is absolutely fair to say that bloggers were among those that attacked the Frosts.

But Malkin is much more than a blogger—she pulls regular gigs at Fox News, and was a syndicated columnist (you know, NYT, in newspapers?) long before she even started a blog. And Rush, who piled on top of all those bloggers to attack the Frosts? Offensive, certainly, but not a blogger. Furthermore, there are signs that the whole campaign was coordinated by that McConnell staffer who is now relieved he didn't release a press release on the Frosts. Senate staffers are not primarily bloggers, they're political operatives. And rather than explain all these things—rather than note that Saint Rush joined the fun of attacking a 12 year old kid—the NYT just used shorthand that, conveniently for them, distances this kind of behavior from anything that would show up in dead tree (or cable or radiowave) media. That way, the NYT doesn't have to look too hard to find the logic of the attacks, it can just blame it on stinking bloggers.

This is not new, of course. But it's something I've become more attuned to lately, partly because I just explained to a bunch of lawyers that most of the lefty blogosphere finds Malkin's "ethics" just as reprehensible as any journalist does, and partly because of a spat I had with a local journalist who makes similar errors.