

# ANA MARIE COX: I LET MCCAIN'S CRANKINESS GO BECAUSE I THINK HIS RIBS ARE DELICIOUS

John Amato links to this fascinating exchange on Howie Kurtz's show (you have to click through the link for Kurtz—the YouTube is McCain's daughter talking about how KEWL it is to hang out with the—apparently drunk and—famous journalists). In it, Ana Marie Cox explains how she ignores McCain's crankiness.

KURTZ: But that suggests that the people who have been traveling with him regularly...

COX: Yes.

KURTZ: ... become part of the bubble, part of the team?

COX: Become part of the bubble, and also, I mean, I think what happens is that you – if you've been covering him for a long time, there's a sense that, well, he does that all the time, it's not worth reporting, because he does – he's a cranky old man. I mean, to be quite frank. You know, like, and also, I've gotten much tougher terseness than Bumiller got just there. And...

COX: But the cameras weren't rolling. And also, we wrote it off to, like, you know, he hadn't had his fifth cup of Starbucks today. [emphasis Amato's]

But Amato doesn't include the most important context to Ana Marie's comment. Howie notes that some people have been receiving better treatment from McCain than others of late.

KURTZ: And McCain did hold a barbecue

for the press at his ranch in Sedona  
where some people were in attendance.

COX: Yes, uh, delicious dry rubbed  
barbecue ribs, actually, baby back ribs.

KURTZ: First hand report!

Goodness! Did Howie catch Ana Marie going easy  
on McCain because she loves slurping on his his  
ribs?

A press "critic" worth his salt, of course,  
might point out that journalists who haven't  
been wined and dined by McCain might find the  
fact that he's a cranky old man  
newsworthy—particularly for a guy auditioning to  
put his hands on the nuclear football. A  
"critic" might point out that that's precisely  
the problem with the press' little rib-sucking  
fun with McCain, it makes them less likely to  
actually report the things we might like to know  
about these guys.

Not surprisingly, the "critic" in question did  
none of those things. I suspect Howie's just  
hoping to be invited next time around.