

Good afternoon.

Thank you Governor Owen for the nice introduction.

You know, I can't figure out why you would invite me to come all the way to Denver to Speak to a bunch of reporters.

In case you haven't heard, I don't like reporters.

In fact, someone ask me the other day what the one thing is that I like best about my job as Governor.

I said I thought the best thing was that I am getting such a great education.

No college, including Harvard could ever teach me what I have learned over the last year.

Of course, they then asked me what worst thing about being Governor was.

That was easy: Reporters

So you see why I am perplexed that you would ask me to come here today?

Seriously, though I am glad to be here and want you to know that we had a great time yesterday taking a look at your light rail line here in Denver.

I want to thank the people here in Denver and the Colorado Transportation folks for taking the time to show us your success in developing light rail.

However, I'm sure that you are sick of hearing about light rail and transportation and you probably came here to have some fun.

So let's have some fun.

The media: My favorite subject.

Before I became governor I thought I had seen it all.

But, believe me, since I've been in this job I have seen a lot more.

For Example.

I really got to see some sloppy journalism when my now-infamous Playboy interview came out.

Well, actually, it hadn't come out yet.

Some *excerpts* came out. And the media jumped on those without reading the whole thing.

For instance, in the interview, I said I could see where some people in the Navy would think Tailhook was much ado about nothing.

But in the very next breath I said:

I don't condone it.

But what got reported?

It got reported that *I* said it was much ado about nothing!

I said just the opposite!

CNN went on the air and reported it wrong.

And the Minneapolis paper had it wrong in a headline that read:

"Governor says Tailhook much ado about nothing."

If they printed a correction, I didn't see it, and it certainly wasn't in big headline type.

I'll tell you another thing that bugs me about the media:

They don't admit that they're out to make a buck just like any other business.

They're in it to sell ads and get readers or viewers.

Why do you think it's always so obvious when they're in a ratings book?

The other night in Minneapolis, a TV station did an "in-depth" report on pregnancy risks for older women.

And it just so happens that their main anchor, who did one of those reporter-involvement stories, was a pregnant older woman.

Do you think they did that story because of a need for the public to know? There was no news value to that story, no new facts that hadn't ever been reported.

No, they did it for ratings, especially to lure women of a certain age. Why don't they just admit they're not these holier-than-thou journalists and they just want to please the advertisers?

Now I'm probably going to get taken to task for getting in my digs, but that brings me to another of my complaints:

They can dish it out, but they can't take it.

On my weekly radio show, I like to take a few minutes to air my complaints about the media.

Boy, you should see the looks on the faces of those reporters when I make my case. They love to criticize the governor, but when it's my turn, they're not happy at all.

And they're not crazy about another one of my suggestions, one of my reforms, really:

Term limits for the capitol press corps.

Hey, it makes sense.

It would keep things interesting—you'd get some fresh blood in there, instead of the same old people who haven't been out in the real world in 20 years.

When I got elected no one predicted it.

On election night all the "expert" political pundits in the media were frozen like deer in headlights.

So what did they do?

Well the very next day their pre-election stories of 'Jesse Can't Win' turned into post-election stories of 'Jesse Can't Govern'.

In fact one newspaper in the Twin Cities still has a hard time admitting that I won.

Anyway. My point is that the media, just like many entrenched politicians, get used to the conventional and when the unconventional confronts them they can't handle it.

'But this isn't the way we do things' is a refrain that we hear from the media all the time.

My answer to them is 'well, that's not the way I do things, so get used to it.'

I have to be careful here because I have to catch an airplane and I could go one forever talking about my favorite subject.

One more thing and then I'll take some questions.

I want to get back to news judgment.

What really bothers me is when I work very hard for weeks on developing a serious proposal on education, or transportation, or some serious public policy issue and then on the day I announce it the TV stations will usually play something that is completely off the subject.

If I was to propose a 100 billion dollar tax cut and on the same day, in an off the cuff remark, said that my personal opinion was that First Ladies should be paid for their work on behalf of the state, guess which one would lead the news at 10?

One final thing:

Hypocrisy.

When I refereed at a WWF event last summer the St. Paul Pioneer Press editorial page ripped me for participating in a wrestling event that drew kids to "raw language, violence and sex."

First of all, if you don't want your kids watching wrestling, I'm fine with that, but don't tell me about it, tell your kids.

It's called parenting.

But back to the Pioneer Press.

They ripped me for doing the WWF event while their own newspaper put ads for escort services, strip clubs and X-rated videos right in their sports section.

But according to the hypocrites at the Pioneer Press the sex in their newspaper is OK.

You figure that one out.

Finally, here's one of my favorites.

You all know Katie Couric of NBC's Today program.

Here is what Katie said about me:

"I think he's interesting. But I don't think he warrants quite the amount of news coverage he has received...I think it's a serious case of overexposure."

Katie...Katie... Katie...

About a week later Katie was on the phone begging my communications director to get me on her show.

Needless to say, before I did the show I got an apology from Katie.

...And people wonder why I have trouble with the media.

Thank you.

I am happy to take a couple questions.