

Today On NBC

2007. Acrylic on canvas, 30 x 40"

The fake journalism of NBC News begins with the Today Show, when one of the morning personalities recites scripted questions to Tim Russert, so he in turn can cover Bush Administration talking points, and attempt to discredit opposition to Bush Administration policies.

These little staged performances also give Russert the opportunity to pontificate on topics that he has already been given access to, hoping to maintain his image of some authoritative political analyst. His *Washington Speakers Bureau* website page calls it, "his unparalleled insights on the latest Washington headlines." This gimmick was on display throughout the lead up to the war and the Valerie Plame/Bush Leak scandal (even though Russert was more than likely already privy to what the Bush Administration was up to via Mary Matalin – for Dick Cheney, Karl Rove, and Robert Novak). Russert likes to portray himself as the innocent party with "unparalleled insights" just following a story. More than likely, he was deeply involved in both the pre-war spin and the leak of the CIA officer's name, all to provide assistance to the Bush Administration.

The *Washington Speakers Bureau* page goes on to say, "Russert regales audiences with first hand accounts of asking tough questions." He also claims to unravel Washington's "complexities." But the real gem is, "Russert helps audiences cut through the spin and get to the truth." As the public learns more about Russert the fact is he's all about spin and very little of it is grounded in truth.

In an April 2007 interview with *Bill Moyers Journal*. Moyers asked Russert about Cheney and the *New York Times* leak regarding aluminum tubing, and how coincidentally, Cheney was on Meet the Press the very day the leak appeared in the *Times*. Moyers asked Russert if he knew about the leak in advance. Russert nervously claimed he did not. Then Russert claimed that he wished he had access to other government officials who may have had doubts about the story. He said, "What my concern was, is that there were concerns expressed by other government officials. And to this day, I wish my phone had rung, or I had access to them."

He wished his phone had rung? Is it not the job of the journalist to make the phone calls? Why did he not seek out the government officials?

Obviously Russert only goes with the story of the people who grant him access, make the calls to him, rings his phone. Those are the people who get on his show; the people with the bogus story.