

The Washington Post
Martha McAteer
Letter to the Editor
1150 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20071

To The Editor:

Howard Kurtz's June 21 "Media Notes" column makes an erroneous implication about the relative popularity of Bill Clinton and Ronald Reagan at the end of their respective presidencies. Kurtz writes, "Reagan, despite the Iran-contra scandal, left office a popular figure; Clinton's departure came two years after he was impeached and was clouded by his wave of last-minute pardons."

Kurtz's suggestion that Reagan, unlike Clinton, "left office a popular figure" is simply false. Consider:

- Clinton's final Gallup job approval rating before leaving office was 65 percent – the "highest for a departing president in the half-century of modern polling," according to USA Today. Reagan's was 63 percent.
- Clinton had a higher average Gallup approval rating (55 percent) over the course of his presidency than Reagan (53 percent).
- Gallup recently noted, "Clinton's overall second-term average was substantially higher than his first term, at 61%. (Reagan's second-term average was 55%.)"
- Gallup approval ratings for the last five presidents shows that Clinton was consistently much more popular during his last two years in office than Reagan was during his last two years as president.

We would appreciate it if the Washington Post would take note of these facts.

DAVID BROCK
President
Media Matters for America