



Tell the Truth! 2004

# Media Reality ✓ Check

Expert Documentation of the Latest Liberal Media Bias ☼ Friday, October 8, 2004

Press Contact:  
Tim Scheiderer  
(703) 683-5004  
Vol. 8, No. 42  
www.mrc.org

Letting the Moderator Pick the Gallup Questioners Led to a Bigger Slant in Liberal Questioners in 2000

## Will the "Uncommitted" Be Mostly Liberals?

This morning ABC's Charles Gibson explained that he will have the power to select which "uncommitted" voters selected by Gallup will ask questions of Bush and Kerry tonight. "We will eliminate some that seem, you know, superfluous or seem redundant, or whatever. And then I simply pick some at random, trying to cover the subjects that I think are important to voters." Will Gibson avoid conservative questions?

In 2000, debate moderator Jim Lehrer approved mostly liberal questions from the "uncommitted." Eight questions came from a liberal viewpoint, only two could be counted as conservative, and five were requests for information without an ideological tone.

Previous town hall debates were not this slanted. In the 1992 debate in Richmond, we scored eight audience questions as straightforward requests for information, four liberal questions, and no conservative questions. In the 1996 debate in San Diego, we scored ten questions as straightforward requests for information, five liberal questions, and three conservative questions.

All together, these three "town hall" debates included 23 informational questions, 17 liberal questions, and six from the right. You could argue that balance should dictate a majority of conservative questions tonight. Here are the liberal questions (some edited for space) from 2000:

**ONE:** "How do you feel about HMOs and insurance companies making the critical decisions that affect people's lives instead of the medical professionals? And why are the HMOs and insurance companies not held accountable for their decisions?"

**TWO:** "Are either of you concerned with finding some feasible way to lower the price of pharmaceutical drugs?"

**THREE:** "Would you be open to the ideal of a national health care plan for everybody?"

**FOUR:** "In the school district in which I work and in countless others across the nation, we face crumbling school buildings, increased school violence, student apathy, overcrowding, lack of funding, lawsuits, the list goes on. I could mention low teacher pay, but I won't. What can you tell me and my fellow American teachers today about your plans for our immediate future?"

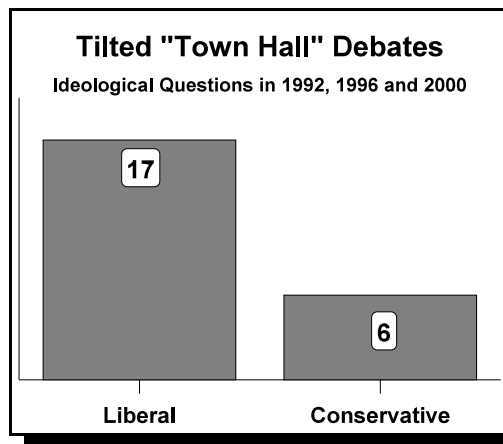
**FIVE:** "We'd like to know why you object to the Brady handgun bill, if you do object to it. Because in a recent TV ad, it showed that the [NRA] says if you are elected that they will be working out of your office...actually, that kind of bothers me."

**SIX:** "The family farms are disappearing and having a hard time, even in the current positive economic environment. What steps would you or your administration take on agricultural policy developments to protect the family farms for this multi-functional service they perform?"

**SEVEN:** "How will your administration address diversity, inclusiveness? And what role will affirmative action play in your overall plan?"

**EIGHT:** "You seemed to overly enjoy, as a matter of fact proud that Texas...led the nation in execution of prisoners. Sir, did I misread your response, and are you really, really proud of the fact that Texas is number one in executions?"

— Tim Graham



Read the Media Research Center's complete analysis of tonight's presidential debate at [www.mrc.org](http://www.mrc.org).  
To schedule an interview with an MRC spokesman, please contact Tim Scheiderer at (703) 683-5004