



Campaign 2004 Media Reality Check

QUICK TAKE

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ABC, NBC FLAY NADER AS SPOILER OF GORE'S 2000 VICTORY, SUGGEST HE'S ONLY RUNNING TO STOKE "ENORMOUS EGO"

NETWORKS TO NADER: DROP OUT!

Democrats are extremely unhappy that Ralph Nader is going to run for President again. On CNN this morning, Democratic Party chair Terry McAuliffe complained: "Every major liberal and progressive group who has supported the causes that he has worked on told him not to run. His closest advisers told him not to run. The stakes in this election are just so gigantic that we need every potential vote out there."

When ABC and NBC interviewed Nader today, they didn't ask a single question about the issues that drove his candidacy. They only echoed Democratic angst that Nader would drain votes from their nominee. On NBC's *Today*, Matt Lauer cited only disgruntled Democrats: "Howard Dean, who dropped out of the race recently, said he will actively campaign against you and urge his supporters not to vote for you. Al Sharpton says he will go on a nationwide campaign to make sure people don't vote for you. This is from Scott Maddox, the chairman of the Democratic Party in Florida: **'I think that Ralph Nader is proving the only master he serves is his enormous ego.'**"

On *Good Morning America*, ABC's Charles Gibson began: "We all watched you yesterday and come down to this, realistically. You don't have a chance of winning, and realistically, you can keep the Democratic candidate from winning. Is that okay with you?...I heard you just a moment ago make the case that you wouldn't cost John Kerry the presidency, but **the simple fact is four years ago you did cost Al Gore the presidency, didn't you?**" Didn't anything Al Gore said or did play a role in his defeat?

Gibson added: "Even your friends, Mr. Nader, are asking that you not run. You're very familiar, I know, with the Ralph Don't Run Web site. I just want to play a little bit of the ad that's on that Web site right now." The ad sounded like Gibson (or vice versa) in emphasizing so-called simple fact: "The simple fact is, if Nader had not run, Gore would be President, not Bush. This time in 2004, the stakes are far too high."

The last time network anchors were this hostile to Nader was late in 2000. On October, 27, 2000, Gibson asked Nader a familiar-sounding question: "If you awake on the morning of Wednesday, November 8 and find that you cost Al Gore enough electoral votes to cost him the election, is that going to upset you in the least?"