



Campaign 2000 Media Reality Check **QUICK TAKE**

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FLORIDA DIMPLE-SPOTTERS ARE DOING "PHENOMENAL WORK" **ABC'S DIANE SAWYER CAN'T SPOT NON-VOTES, BUT PRAISES THOSE WHO CAN**

Racing through the numerical options for a Gore victory this morning, ABC's Political Analyst George Stephanopoulos announced on Wednesday's *Good Morning America* that his Democratic sources estimate that if a **"looser standard"** of counting votes is allowed in Florida, Al Gore would finally achieve a lead of a couple of hundred votes.

How loose is loose? The Democrats want "dimpled" ballots, or punch cards that have been neither punched nor perforated but which have a barely-detectable dent near what would be the right hole, added to Gore's count so that he, not Bush, would be President.

After Stephanopoulos's arithmetic display, viewers saw co-host Diane Sawyer hold up a punch card ballot that she said was dimpled. **"I'm holding this because I've been obsessed with what it is to see an actual ballot with a dimple in it and it is a very subtle thing,"** Sawyer said. **"And we, I don't think, I've been putting flashlights through it,"** at which point she aimed a flashlight beam through the paper, revealing no obvious holes or marks. **"I'm telling you the people doing this work are really doing phenomenal work to see all of this and to take care over all of these,"** she added.

Her co-host, Charles Gibson, remarked that **"It's just a slight indentation in that in that uh, in that card."**

Sawyer hastened to add that **"If you didn't see it [the dimple] at home that's because it's really hard for you to see."**

Gibson agreed: **"And they're not hitting it with a pen so that you see an ink point, they're hitting it with a stylus so you just have to look for an indentation."**

Sawyer: **"That's right."**

Moments later, when Gibson interviewed Gore chief William Daley, he failed to challenge him to defend the Gore camp's insistence that such unreliable marks be counted as votes. Instead, he tossed a softball about last night's ruling from the Florida Supreme Court: **"Did you expect this much of a victory from the court?"**

To speak with an MRC spokesperson regarding the media's coverage of Campaign 2000, call Katie Wright at (703) 683-5004.