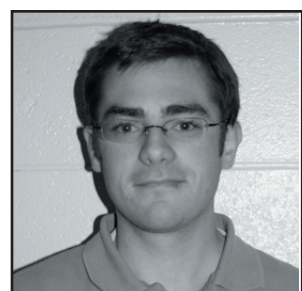


Q&A: What matters to you in this election?



Joseph Hilton, Senior

"I'm a registered Republican, but I'm not voting for either Bush or Kerry. I'm leaning toward the Libertarian candidate, Michael Badnarik. I personally feel that he'll defend the liberties that both Bush and Kerry will trample all over in the name of their own special interests."



Frank Lettieri, Senior

"I'm undecided right now. I don't like either candidate that much, but I was leaning toward Bush for a while. I'm waiting for a while until I decide for sure. It's important that I vote for someone who's honest, has integrity and makes national security and keeping us safe a priority."



Nicole Lantino, Senior

"I'm voting for Kerry because he's not Bush. Kerry's politics are closer to what I'd like to see in a president. I'm concerned about the war, a possible draft and abortion rights, because all of those issues concern me."

Debate Review

Senator John Kerry and President George W. Bush faced off for the first time on Thursday, Sept. 30, 2004. Out of all three debates, perhaps it was Bush's best but Kerry still won according to ABC/CNN polls. Kerry was given a 53 to 37 percent win over Bush.

Bush believes we must stay on the offense to defeat the terrorists. Just how many troops need to die before he realizes we can't take over every country? Kerry, like former presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy, knows we need to build our allies to relieve our troops.

Bush tried to paint Kerry as a flip-flopper, even after Kerry explained why he voted for the Iraq War. "I did vote to give the authority, because I thought Saddam Hussein was a threat, and I did accept that intelligence. But I also laid out a very strict series of things we needed to do to proceed from a position of strength." Kerry also said Bush went about it the wrong way and that the \$87 billion would hurt the middle class financially because it took more from them than the wealthy 1 percent. Bush responded that Britain is an ally of the U.S. and so is Poland. However, Poland hardly donated any troops.

In this debate, Kerry quoted history and made his image clear to America. He also mentioned a "real flip-flop" the President made. Bush stated back in 2000 that a military should not be used for nation building which is exactly what he is doing now.

The town hall debate on Friday, Oct. 8, 2004 turned out to be pretty much even with Kerry slightly beating Bush 44 percent to 41 percent, according to an ABC poll. Some of the highlights included Bush saying "Saddam Hussein was a threat because he could have given weapons of mass destruction to terrorist enemies." Kerry responded, "he didn't have weapons of mass destruction. If we'd used smart diplomacy, we could have saved \$200 billion and an invasion of Iraq. And right now, Osama bin Laden might be in jail or dead."

On spending, Kerry said, "The president was handed a \$5.6 trillion surplus. That's where he was when he came into office. We now have a \$2.6 trillion deficit. This is the biggest turnaround in the history of the country. He's the first president in 72 years to lose jobs. This is the first time the United States of America has ever had a tax cut when we're at war." Bush followed up by saying, "The stock market was declining six months prior to my arrival. It was the largest stock market correction—one of the largest in history, which foretold a recession."

According to a CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll taken after the presidential debate, Kerry defeated Bush, 52 to 39 percent. Abortion, gay marriage and religion were all highlights. No politician should have to talk about how religion shapes their policies. John Kerry is Catholic but avoided mixing church and state, when speaking



Nicholas Ballasy

about abortion, he said, "I believe that choice is a woman's choice. It's between a woman, God and her doctor."

Bush said "I believe the ideal world is one in which every child is protected in law and welcomed to life." If you are pro-life, you are for all life. How can people say Bush is pro-life when he is for the death penalty and war?

The biggest miscalculation of the night was Bush denying he ever said he wasn't worried about Bin Laden. After the debate, NBC played a clip of him saying "you know, we're not really worried about him right now." At the end, when talking about his wife, Bush said "she speaks English a lot better than I do. I think people understand what she's saying." There wasn't too much laughter in the audience after that joke.

When it comes to the debates, Kerry was undefeated 3-0. However, an ABC poll shows them in a dead heat at 48 percent each. Remember to go out and vote on November 2, 2004. You won't regret it.



Face-off: Bush vs. Kerry

George W. Bush is a name that has many different meanings to many kinds of people. To me, it is a name I associate with the saying "the lesser of two evils." You may be thinking to yourself, well what does she mean by that? I have come to see George W. Bush as the man I want to run my country for the next four years, not because I think he is better than John Kerry, but rather because John Kerry is worse.

If you look back at September 11, I am not sure anyone could have handled that situation much differently. I honestly believe we bounced back extremely well as a nation, economically and emotionally after such a devastating blow.

Now you ask yourself, but what about the war? Saddam Hussein was a serious threat to the U.S. with both the intent and capability to produce weapons of mass destruction. Wouldn't you want someone to act on information like that? Or should we have just sat and waited for it to all blow over?

So Bush decided to go to war and the vote goes to senate. Ironically, John Kerry votes yes for the war. Funny how this is the same man who fought in Vietnam, came home, realized what an awful thing war was and protested against it. Now, some forty years later, when he is in some sort of authority, Kerry votes pro-war. Makes you



Kim Fleming

wonder. Do you really want someone else with such fleeting ideas on how he feels to be making decisions about your future? I know I certainly do not want a man with the ideology of a thirteen year old who gives into peer pressure at a party running my country.

With all political aspects aside, let us think realistically for a while. Do you really think someone new can change things around? Why take the chance? Our country is in such a vulnerable state, that bringing in someone new may not necessarily be the answer. If you are driving a car with a bad engine that is about to break down, if you change drivers, that car is still in bad shape. Might as well let the person who has been driving the car for years continue to drive it to its destination. No matter who the driver is, the car's problems will remain the same.

Many Bush proponents have based many arguments on the supposed short-coming of John Kerry that he is a "flip-flopper," that he is indecisive in the decisions he makes. They try to paint a picture of Bush as a steadfast leader, keeping the country afloat upon a difficult course. "What better man to lead us out of a war than the man who has been in the mix from the beginning," they say.

To this I would ask, should we get behind our own personal Captain Ahab on his quest for the great white whale that eluded his father? Or, with a logical mind, should we realize that some fresh blood and some fresh ideas might be a better alternative to blind stubbornness?

I believe that one of the greatest assets a leader can possess is the ability to be flexible. In some cases, a situation can appear to be a certain way depending on the information available at the time. As things move on, new intelligence may come to light that drastically changes the situation. Case in point: John Kerry voted to invade Iraq with the idea in mind that Saddam Hussein definitely had stockpiles of chemical and possibly nuclear weapons that he was just itching to unleash upon the American people.

The fact that we now know there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, that the country was so poorly defended that the U.S. military rolled over them in a matter of days, may cause some to, gee I don't know, change their minds about the merits of the invasion. Should an invasion of a foreign nation by the U.S. under false pretenses be allowed to go

unchecked, even punished? I don't think so.

Even though it seems that our country bounced back very well economically from the attack, one must remember that war is great for the economy. WWII helped pull America out of the Great Depression.

Some say Bush's actions were warranted, that sitting on the information about Iraq's military capabilities would have been disastrous. Action had to be taken. How about this? Bush sat on intelligence before Sept. 11, 2001 that showed an imminent, direct threat from Osama Bin Laden to a target in the U.S. What did Dubya do? He sat on it, played golf and went on vacation for 45 percent of his time in office before 9/11.

It's true that Bush set us on this course by allowing the events of 9/11 to happen and by spreading both fear and false information in the American public so efficiently that he was able to invade Iraq. Should we have the same driver continue the journey in his familiar, mechanical failure prone vehicle, or should we take the car to a mechanic and fix the mess under the hood?



David Maccar

The lesser of two evils

In today's society, voters believe there are only two political parties in the country that serve any purpose. Of course, those parties are the Democratic Party and the Republican or Grand Old Party (GOP).

Specifically in this year's important Presidential election, the country is focused on Democratic candidate Senator John Kerry and Republican candidate President George W. Bush. In all probability, this election is going to be one of the closest in history. But why will it be so close? Because both candidates are not good ones and I am finding that people are voting for the lesser of two evils.

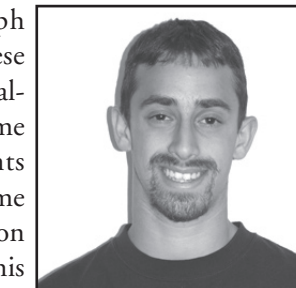
On one hand we have liberal John Kerry. This is a man who many people cannot stand to hear or look at and I am one of them. On the other hand we have George 'Dubya' Bush who is one of the most intelligent presidents yet. Am I being sarcastic here? Oh yeah. Despite his ability to keep the United States of America somewhat stable after the attacks of 9/11, he has put a ridiculous amount of money into the war on Iraq, a country that had nothing to do with 9/11.

So we, as voters, have a tough decision for the 2004 Presidential election. Why must we look at it this way? Why do we think that these are the only two candidates out there? I personally have researched some of the third-party candidates, includ-

ing Ralph Nader. These candidates really make some good points and have some good ideas on how to fix this country. One example of this is William Hall, Jr., an independent candidate who I had never heard of before. His website is professional and I agree with a lot of the plans he would implement if he were President of the United States.

At this point, most of you readers are thinking that voting for either Mr. Nader or Mr. Hall would be a wasted vote. Why would it be wasted? If you dislike both Kerry and Dubya, why vote for them? People become pressured by society to vote for one of the 'main' parties. Also voters feel that they hate one candidate so much that they will vote for the other just to prevent him from being in office. One could travel this path, but I prefer voting for someone I want to be my President.

In this election, I will not waste my vote by voting for who I want for my president. Will you?



Ari Bluestein

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