

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

Brookings Briefing

THE DEMOCRATIC RACE:
A QUICK K.O. — OR A LONG BRAWL?

Thursday, February 5, 2004

Washington, D.C.

[TRANSCRIPT PREPARED FROM A TAPE RECORDING.]

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PROCEEDINGS

MR. DIONNE: Before we start, does everybody have Adam's fascinating little data sheet? If not, Rob will passing it out. I'm going to ask Adam to describe his fascinating numbers. Also, Adam had a very interesting piece in the New York Times today, which he timed just for the purposes of this event. So we're very grateful to him for that. I'm hoping he will talk about it.

Welcome, everyone. I'm E.J. Dionne. I'm a senior fellow here at Brookings and an occasional journalistic hack--actually that's how I've seen myself mostly.

We have a wonderful panel here today. I want to ensure everybody that we will not be at all reluctant to discuss the horse race. We're not supposed to do that. A journalistic friend of mine said recently that voters whose candidates are losing tend to go to journalists and say why are you only covering the horse race, until their candidate starts winning and then they can't get enough horse-race coverage. So we'll see how this audience breaks up. And our own Steve Smith said how can you cover baseball without looking at the standings. So we won't discuss that. I going to introduce the panel, but Tom will begin completely, or partially, off the horse race for a moment because he wanted to talk about it--I think it's a good idea--about what effect this process so far is having on politics overall, what good things have come out of this process so far, and perhaps also what problems there have been with this process.

We have a wonderful lineup here. Anna Greenberg is not only a well-known poll-taker, a--I usually use the word "pollster," but Adam is an editor, and he has objected to that word for 25 years.

MR. CLYMER: Times have changed. It's the style rules on that.

MR. DIONNE: It used to be. But Adam always used to change my copy to "poll-taker" when I'd say "pollster."

Anna could be a pollster or a poll-taker, and a very distinguished one. She is also a distinguished academic. She taught at the Kennedy School at Harvard, has her degree from Yale, and knows a lot about a lot of topics but is particularly interested in values, has done a lot of polling on religion, has done a lot of work on young people and political participation. I'm hoping all of that comes up in her talk.

Tony Corrado has spent his entire life in one long participant-observer experiment. Tony is a great academic. He's a professor at Colby College. He's also a world-class specialist on campaign finance reform. At the same time, Tony has worked in an awful lot of campaigns. And Tony recently told me that he can discuss everything he's ever done in a campaign because the statute of limitations has won on every one of the campaigns that he has worked in. So I'm very grateful to Tony.

And then Adam Clymer, whose journalistic career has taken him from Moscow to Norfolk to Washington, D.C. to New Delhi. He was the chief Washington correspondent for the New York Times, he was the Washington editor, he was the political editor, the chief national political correspondent. He oversaw polling at the New York Times. He contributed to "Reagan: The Man and the President," a book by Times reporters published in 1981, and he wrote a really fine book on Edward Kennedy published in 1999 by William Morrow, to excellent reviews, and the book deserved them. He also worked at the Virginian Pilot in Norfolk, the Baltimore Sun, the New York Daily News. He is now visiting scholar at the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania, or of the University of Pennsylvania because he works now in his Washington office serving as political director of the National Annenberg

Election Survey. That sounds like you're trying to elect Annenberg. He is political director for the Annenberg campaign. It's very good to have Adam with us.

I want to start out by turning to Tom to talk about the effects on the process. And then I'm going to ask Adam to discuss both his op-ed in that handout that most of you, I hope, have by now, essentially what do we know and how do we know it? about how to vote--what do voters know and how do they know it? And then we'll move forward. Tom Mann.

MR. MANN: Thank you, E.J. Just to get the lofty stuff out of the way so we can get to real politics quickly--yesterday I did the Diane Rehm Show, and Diane said she's been besieged by e-mailers and callers saying: why do you spend so much time on the horse race? Talk about the issues, and tell us about the differences among the candidates. So we did that. It took us about 30 seconds, and we then delved into the process.

What I'd like to do is simply raise some questions about the process. We began this conversation with a Brookings briefing on the book "The Front-loading Problem" a couple of weeks ago. It was before the Iowa caucuses. We talked about this unusual system of the "invisible primary" that's largely an elite activist process the year before the Iowa caucuses, followed by an extraordinarily front-loaded calendar of caucuses and primaries, which has become even more telescoped with the decision by the Democrats to allow events to occur a month earlier than they had before, therefore following hard on the heels of the New Hampshire primary. And then, of course, there is a delegate-selection process, which was put in place initially by the McGovern-Fraser reforms in which most of the delegates are formally selected in primaries and caucuses

but in which almost a fifth--so-called super delegates--have the freedom to select as they wish.

Now, we know that process has a lot of shortcomings, and Adam's op-ed this morning certainly articulated a good number of those, and I suspect he will flesh that out for us this morning. It turns out voters, when they get an opportunity, make their decisions on the basis of really very fragile bits of information. There tends to be a rapid narrowing of the field after Iowa. Momentum, either positive or negative, can develop very quickly in a way that tends to overwhelm the other kind of deliberative processes that we would like to think are involved in selecting a party's nominee.

All of that is true, and if I had my druthers, I would alter that process in various ways. But in addition to that, it's worth noting that some positive things have occurred during the course of this process. Number one, we've had long-shot candidates have their day in the sun. We've seen an opportunity for a former governor of a small state to basically set the agenda for a party, as Howard Dean has, and to demonstrate new fund-raising capacities that hadn't been fully exploited by Democrats in the past.

We've seen that the process has allowed a testing of candidates in very different settings in which they have succeeded and failed and succeeded again. But that's a good measure, it seems to me, of a candidate's durability in the general election and even conceivably a test of his abilities in the Oval Office.

We've seen a process in which the Democrats, rather than engaging in internecine warfare, have actually worked to develop a policy consensus for the most part, and in which most of their critical commentary has been focused on the other party and on the incumbent president, not on one another.

You could argue that the candidates who were the ideological outliers are the ones that were first to drop out of the process, to be rejected, if you will--Gephardt on the left, at least as far as his really aggressive trade policies, his belief that all of the tax cuts should be repealed and all of it spent on health insurance; and Lieberman on the right, with a message of support for the war in Iraq, moderation, and slightly disguised kinship with Bill Bennett on some sort of Janet Jackson-like issues. None of this really resonated with the electorate. And the candidate who's most in danger now of going down, Howard Dean, is a complicated combination of a record of fiscal conservatism but certainly a very aggressive posture with regard both to Iraq and the tax cuts. So it seems to me you could argue that in this process the candidates that are standing are candidates who are closest to what I would call an emerging Democratic policy consensus, and the real issue is which of those candidates could carry that case to President Bush and the Republicans most effectively.

Now, we also saw the results this Tuesday, February 3, of allowing this process to go on a bit longer. We don't know how much longer. We have the caucuses in three states--Michigan, Washington, and Maine--this weekend, two Southern primaries on Tuesday, a Wisconsin primary, and some smaller events coming up. All in all, you would like to see this process extend so that the March 2 Super Tuesday event, when so many delegates will be chosen, could be an opportunity for many Democrats from across the country to either select or confirm the choice of the nominee.

The question really is: is there opportunity for voters to respond to a new buyers' remorse? Is the momentum that John Kerry generated in Iowa, carried in New Hampshire, and then capitalized on this past Tuesday sufficient to prevent an opportunity for voters to take one last look at him and for John Edwards and Wesley

Clark and potentially Howard Dean to raise questions that will almost certainly be asked in the general election?

That's a good question. A slightly more deliberate, paced calendar would make it more likely. But let's be grateful that some of the candidates opted for public financing and that there were resources there, if only partial payments, but with promises to deliver. It allowed candidacies, certainly like Edwards and Clark, to go forward, to provide voters an opportunity. It's not a perfect system; it's a flawed system. But in spite of that, it seems to me, we've managed to benefit some from it.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you very much. And I think Tom is a perfect segue to Adam, because this issue of whether we've spread the calendar up too much and given voters enough time to know things. I think, first of all, on your little chart here we have what I will now think of as the climber's statistic. John Edwards will be in good shape to win the nomination when the proportion of voters who know he is a son of a mill worker passes the number that say he is a trial lawyer. Right now trial lawyer is winning. Also, Clark will have--climber's statistic number 2, Clark will be doing better when the number who know he is a decorated veteran goes up. I think that's striking. And then, the real sign of the Kerry roll is the proportion who think John Kerry is the son of a mill worker is on the rise.

Adam, please. Talk about some of this good work you're doing.

MR. CLYMER: Well, first of all, let me say, make this apology for the data. This isn't weighted. And it's not the kind of thing we would put out for publication particularly--there's nothing wrong with it, but it's not massaged as much. But I thought it was interesting to see what happens with perceptions in this Democratic primary system, also known as a winning-candidate-development-related program.

[Laughter.]

MR. CLYMER: And obviously you can't measure everything that's in the heads of Democratic primary voters, and you can't measure it in the way that distinguishes between the policy positions which, as Tom points out, are really very close to each other. Oppose the war. All right, at what point and in what way? All right, Dean is better known, and has been all the way through, for opposing the war. But in some respects, the other guys do, too.

When you hear somebody denouncing tax cuts for the rich and not saying but I--you may think he's against all of the Bush tax cuts, because after all, the Democrats have been telling you for months that all the Bush tax cuts are for the rich--except when they want to pick on Howard Dean and then they say, well, what about the middle class? So the confusion getting the names a little bit wrong is, I think, a lot more understandable and less to worry about than the relatively low numbers of people who know more or less, you know, the sort of basic campaign message of John Edwards, son of a mill worker. I mean, I don't believe I have ever heard him speak this year when that wasn't, you know, a good chunk of his opening. And only a quarter of the people in the country know that about him. He does not use the words "trial lawyer" as he describes himself. And in fact, the other Democrats don't use those words about him. But as E.J. said, a lot more people, you know, can identify him as one of them than as a son of a mill worker.

And I agree with Tom that there was time for buyer's remorse. The Iowa caucus electorate, about 22 percent of the half a million registered Democrats in Iowa, had enough time to think about it and change its mind about him. Now, as I argued a little bit facetiously in the Times this morning, the Iowa voters seem to have been

accorded the roles once occupied by Warren Hearns, Bill Daley, David Lawrence--the bosses that the Democratic reform commissions of the '70s--1969 and forward--were going to do away with. They wanted everyone to have a full, meaningful opportunity to participate.

They had that in Iowa. They had it in New Hampshire, although I think they were very strongly affected by what they saw had happened in Iowa, both--and even before the badly broadcast scream speech; that is to say, the fact that Dean lost badly in Iowa was affecting, I'm sure, New Hampshire voters in their perceptions.

On the other hand, I'm always a little bit surprised--gee, I remember elections in which nobody was going to pay attention to the fact that Paul Tsongas could win the New Hampshire primary; what the heck, he was from the state next door. When the Carter people thought they were going to lose New Hampshire to Kennedy, they were diminishing it--Kennedy's from next door. Here, we had a contest between two guys from next door and great significance is attached to it. Well, it's always a good story when somebody comes back. It's always a good story when the front runner is knocked off his perch.

But otherwise, why on earth did John Kerry get 51 percent in Missouri, a state which had not had a primary campaign until one week after Dick Gephardt dropped out? That is to say, nobody went there, nobody put ads up until after the New Hampshire primary. They had one week. Now, there was a modest buy from Kerry, and I don't have figures, it's possible that every Democrat in Missouri tuned into that MSNBC debate from Charleston to learn more about the candidates. But I think if they had, the ratings would indicate that the rest of the country had a minus listenership. And so what did they know? They knew that Kerry had won.

Now, I should think there is no question that that's a better thing, as you're judging voters, than knowing that he lost. I mean, if a guy loses, if there's someone else who gets more votes somewhere else, well, there's always the risk that that guy Bush will get more votes down the line. But I don't think it's a particularly thorough observation.

The places where Kerry lost on Tuesday were places where other candidates had really spent a lot of time and let the voters get to know them, built organizations, that is to say, Edwards in South Carolina and Clark in Oklahoma--that is to say, if the eventual counting of the votes in Oklahoma is ever completed and shows that Clark won.

MR. DIONNE: Katherine Harris has been brought in to--

[Laughter.]

MR. CLYMER: Right. And I don't think that the system provides that meaningful opportunity for voters to think about it. And I think it's--this is by no means an argument that John Kerry is a bad choice for the Democratic nomination. He may be a very good one. But he hasn't had--his Senate record, which is his national record, hasn't had any particularly scrutiny. It's a record with 19 years of votes and two or three causes and not a whole lot of legislative accomplishment. And that's a hard story for people to write about. How do you write about somebody who--you know, writing about Ted Kennedy and his legislative record, you know, for it or against it, that was relatively easy, except there was so much of it. But writing about John Kerry's is a little harder.

But to be fair, a similarly initialed Massachusetts senator could have been held to the same standard 44 years ago. That is to say, John F. Kennedy didn't have

much of a legislative record and he had a couple of causes that he'd been connected to, and he made a pretty good nominee. He won.

I don't think--you know, I think the Democrats would be better off if they could explore, civilly, the shortcomings and values of their current front runner and indeed people who are challenging him. I don't think that's going to happen, because I don't think there is enough time, I don't think there is enough money available for anybody to really get a message out on television in the states--I mean, I did see Kerry up this morning, so I presume he is not trying to influence the D.C. caucuses, but the Virginia electorate. And Clark seems--Clark, who was a familiar presence, seems to have disappeared.

But assume for a moment that Edwards wins comfortably in both Tennessee and Virginia. Is that going to get him enough money--what the heck, give him Wisconsin as well. Now, that will produce great depression in the Kerry camp and it will slow down his fund-raising. But there are still a lot of pictures to be mortgaged in that home, and they're pretty good pictures. I don't see that that would possibly produce enough enthusiasm for Edwards to be able to make the I'm-the-son-of-a-mill worker argument effectively in any of the important Super Tuesday states.

So I think the system, both with the no gap to speak of after New Hampshire and the money problems that anyone who doesn't have--that anyone who abides by the limits because he has no alternatives faces, you know, opens--you know, is not a very good system. It had its moments, but I think its moments as a good system are past.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you very much, Adam. I just wanted--I like the metaphor with the party bosses, and I hope it's something we can talk about. Because it

appears that Iowa voters behaved as the party bosses used to, which is they looked at the candidates and they actually did care who could win the election. They each sort of talked about temperament and all of that, and they made a judgment that was not unlike a judgment that you could imagine party bosses making.

That's why I want to turn to Anna, because there is something going on in the numbers about President Bush. And I think there are number of issues here that I'd love for you to talk about. One is, to what extent is that affected by the fact that the Democratic message is now in the news a lot simply because there is this competition going on? Which would suggest that, contrary to conventional wisdom, having the Democratic race last longer might be more beneficial rather than less. Secondly, what else is going on with the president in your look at the polling? Why this seeming decline? He ran 7 points behind Kerry in that CNN poll, which is significant in the sense that--it doesn't tell us what's going to happen in November, but it does tell us that this race looks very different than the conventional wisdom said it would look even three or four months ago.

MS. GREENBERG: Well, first of all, let me just say that I'm from New Haven, but I did not go to Yale. I cannot dis my alma mater, University of Chicago.

MR. DIONNE: I'm sorry. There is a Greenberg connection--

MS. GREENBERG: That's okay. They would be insulted in Chicago if they went to Yale.

A couple of observations about "The Front-loaded Primary," which I think bear upon your question. There are a few things that I think are interesting about it, which I don't really have an opinion about whether it was good or bad that we front-loaded it. But first, it did bring an extraordinary amount of intense attention to the

Democrats in the context of having a fairly unified message fairly quickly. There was some sniping between the candidates, but it seemed to me it never got covered in a way that the average voter would have understood it. At a time when Bush's vulnerability, which I would argue has been true for about a year, but various events like catching Saddam Hussein and the war in Iraq have sort of masked some, you know, some vulnerability that's been there for a long time--but as that was really emerging quite strongly, we had this attention to the Democrats and their sort of message, which is, arguably, a kind of populist anti-corporate--not fully evolved yet, but it's something like that--against kind of a Bush sort of tied to corporate interests, for the richest Americans, et cetera.

The second thing that's interesting about the primaries, which says something about where I think this election is going to go, is the turnout has been unbelievably high. I haven't seen the numbers on the primaries on the 3rd, but certainly Iowa and New Hampshire were very, very high. And it suggests that there is an amazing amount of energy in the Democratic primary electorate at least, but I think among Democrats overall who are consumed with beating Bush.

The polarization, which I'm sure all of you know about, is pretty amazing. When you look at--I do a lot of work in battleground states, and when you do the generic vote, 95 percent of Republicans are supporting Bush and 95 percent of Democrats are supporting a generic Democrat, or Kerry, who is sort of the generic Democrat right now, but I don't think we've ever seen that kind of intensity this early on. And it's been true, actually, for a number of months, at least six to eight months you've seen that kind of intense polarization, which I think says something about this election.

You know, I think that Bush's vulnerability is multi-fold. I mean, the first is economic. And, you know, what's really interesting to me is, when you do focus groups and you talk to people about the economy, they understand the economy is growing, they understand the stock market's doing better, they understand on some basic measures of economic performance we're doing better; but nobody thinks they're doing better personally. Nobody thinks that their health care costs are going down, that the cost of sending their kids to college is going down, that the costs for housing or transportation, all the things I call middle-class squeeze--none of them see that sort of being in any way alleviated.

So Bush, in my view, is not getting a lot of credit for the economy being better even though they have some vague sense that the tax cuts created stimulus, which is allowing the economy to grow. And this is important, especially in Rust Belt states, like Ohio, where, you know, which lost more manufacturing jobs than any other state in the country; but also in states like Missouri, which I think will be very tough--might be tough for Democrats to win, but could be competitive.

The second issue, which is something that's a surprise to me and, you know, I'm sure everybody who pays attention to polling knows this, that generally the deficit is not a very salient political issue. People tend not to understand it very well. It tends not--as an issue on its own, tends to really interest--you know, mainly better-educated older white men seem to care about the deficit, but that's about the only group that tends to care about it in a sustained kind of way. And the way the deficit is emerging as an issue is pretty interesting to me, especially among older voters, voters over 50--sorry for everyone who's over 50 and I've called you older in the room.

But, you know, people who are pre-retirement or retired or relying on Social Security understand pretty well the connection between their kind of long-term retirement security and the deficit. And so when there are stories about the increase in how much Medicare is going to cost, it just piles on. And I'm seeing in the surveys that I'm doing that the deficit is emerging as a real vulnerability for Bush.

You know, and it's sort of ironic that Democrats historically have been the tax-and-spend liberals, but when you look at who's sort of better on government spending, who's better on the deficit, you know, we have a--I'm trying to remember if it's on Democracy Court [?] poll--but by 30 points people think they want to go in a different direction on government spending than President Bush. So it almost in some sense helps, I think, neutralize some of the attacks that we would normally see about Democrats being tax-and-spend liberals, because it seems to me that Bush has such a problem on this question of how he's handling the budget and spending.

The final, you know, issue, the central sort of, you know, economic policy from Bush are the tax cuts. And again, I think this is going to be--I think that there was an assumption, and I think that even Democrats made this assumption in 2002, to their detriment, that you couldn't really touch the Bush tax cuts, that you couldn't attack them. I've never believed that. All the polling data shows that people believe the tax cuts disproportionately went to the wealthy and that there's systematic unfairness in the system, where rich and corporations get to use loopholes and offshore accounts in order to get out of paying their fair share and that, you know, middle- and working-class people are bearing the burden of paying taxes in this country.

And, you know, while people--in focus groups, people say, yeah I got my \$300, I used it to pay my credit card bill that month, but they don't see it as giving them

any kind of long-term economic security, which they see as health care, education, all the issues that I mentioned at the beginning. And so I think we're going to see some pretty sustained attacks on tax cuts, and I think that the trouble he's going to have within his own party on making them permanent and a variety of other things are going to be very important in the next few months.

The second, I think, big vulnerability is Iraq and foreign policy more broadly. But Iraq has two pieces to it. It has a kind of economic piece, which is kind of a priorities piece, which is, you know, why is he spending so much time and money abroad and not enough here. And it's, you know, it taps into some deeply isolationist and xenophobic sort of attitudes that we see in the American public, especially-- bizarrely--young non-college-educated women, who--and [inaudible] folks--who have said why don't we just carpet-bomb the Middle East and pave it over and we'll be done with it.

But there is a real--

You can't make that stuff up.

But, you know, this is a real problem. It has memories of the first Bush, you know, spending too much time abroad. But it's not just too much time and money abroad, it's like, it's not doing it well. And you know, when you look at the question of shall we go in the same direction as Bush on foreign policy in Iraq, people are pretty evenly split about Iraq, but by 5 or 6 points want to go in a different direction than Bush on foreign policy. They understand that the world respects us less than they did four years ago. They understand that not having strong ties to international institutions and other countries makes the world less safe for America. This is actually particularly true among men. Women, again, tend to just want to be done with the world and want to

deal with problems at home. Men sort of understand better that the world--we're intertwined and it has an impact on our own security at home.

And I think that if you can separate foreign policy in Iraq from the security issue, the homeland security issues and war on terrorism, Democrats can actually make a pretty important critique of the president on that. And I think, you know, John Kerry and Clark, obviously, can make that very, very well.

The other concern, which is something that's evolving, and I don't really know where it's going to go, is the question of weapons of mass destruction, the intelligence failures. You know, I don't--I still believe that the president gets fair--still has this kind of 9/11 halo, or Teflon, that still makes it very hard to talk about him as someone who's deliberately dishonest or not trustworthy.

Though I believe that people on this question of sharing his values are moving away from him on policy grounds, which I think is the only way Democrats can basically attack him anyway. I don't think you can go right at him and say he's dishonest or he's, you know, a bad person, but I think when you talk about his policy priorities and whose side he's on, it starts having a corrosive effect on sharing values. In that CNN poll, bizarrely, Kerry's beating Bush on "sharing your values," which is strange given that kind of character and honesty that's been sort of the trademark--sort of a trait that people associate strongly with Bush.

I don't know how the sustained reporting on the Kay report and the 9/11 commission, all of the--and then this new commission on intelligence--if this erodes his standing in that area. I just don't know. I think we haven't seen it yet to date, a real belief that he was deliberately dishonest, but it may well at least raise questions if not push people over sort of the line to say that he was dishonest. It may raise questions.

So I see him as deeply vulnerable. We see it in all of our surveys across the country. We're seeing it in national surveys. Doesn't mean it's going to be true in nine months. A lot of things can happen. But it's pretty amazing to me how competitive this race is so early.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you very much. From the University of Chicago's most brilliant populist. And I'm glad that Anna said that, you know, there are no older white men in this room, but we can still talk about the deficit. I appreciate that.

Tony Corrado. The candidate who raises the most money before Iowa has gone on to win the nomination in every race in the past 20 years. Unless Howard Dean stages the most remarkable comeback in the history of primary politics, that won't be true this year. Would you talk about that, and talk about--and I guess you--I'd like you to talk about the money issue, but maybe begin a discussion on what happened, or at least so far what has happened, to Howard Dean.

MR. CORRADO: Okay, if I may I will do so in the context of what we've been talking about so far. One of the things that strikes me, E.J., is that this race looked so different from past races, in so many ways, four or five weeks ago. In some ways we had the most intriguing lead-up to a Democratic presidential nomination contest that we'd seen in the modern era. Between, the division in the country over Bush, the Dean phenomenon, the role of the Internet as a possible new campaign vehicle, the rise of Clark, the notion of insurgents becoming front runners, a high level of competition early on in the Democratic race that fueled an unprecedented level of spending, one would think that you would have a Democratic electorate that was much more engaged than Adam's found them to be.

In fact, when I look at these numbers, Adam, it looks like every other presidential nomination contest I've seen in the last 20 years. And it's reinforced by what we saw in Iowa and New Hampshire, where the electorate broke very late, with large portions of the vote decided in the last week or so. Now we're in a phase of the campaign where we've moved beyond retail politics; we're into the phase of media and momentum politics. And voters are basically being asked to make judgments based on the information they've picked up in the last five or six days because they had very little knowledge of these candidates to begin with.

So we have now reached a point in the race where it looks very similar to races in the past. Candidates are now at that point in the campaign where what's really important is the amount of money in the bank each morning. Strategy tends to get dictated not just by electoral geography, not by the calendar or the delegate selection process, but by a candidate's resources and decisions about how to allocate them. I guarantee you that the second topic in every morning meeting going on in these campaigns right now is what's the bank balance, how much came in last night, how much do we have to spend. Can we buy 800 more points in Chattanooga for Tennessee next week? Because none of these campaigns have any real bank balance or any real reservoir of cash. And that's one of the things that's really different. And it gets to the question of Dean and the notion that the front runner who has the most money generally wins.

If you look at past elections, one of the things that has been the case is that whichever candidate raised the most money in the pre-election year was the candidate who went on to the nomination. And one of the reasons for that was that those candidates were capable of running fully funded campaigns in Iowa and New

Hampshire, throw everything they had at those two states. But they always were able to retain a reservoir of cash that they could then use in the next wave of states or that they could use to try to counter the problem of something going wrong in Iowa or New Hampshire.

A classic case in this regard is George Bush last time around. After he stumbled against McCain in New Hampshire on February 1, George Bush had plenty of money to spend to get himself back. In fact, he spent \$13 million in February alone, over half of which was devoted to Super Tuesday. And, we all forget now that everyone, including probably some of the folks in this room, were writing stories about George Bush's profligate spending. He's spending \$440,000 a day. What's he doing with all this money? Well, what he did was he countered the media bounce out of New Hampshire and focused resources on a place like South Carolina, where he could rely on the establishment to create a bit of a defense posture.

Howard Dean was following the Bush model--raising a lot of money, being the front runner, running everywhere, putting up lots of offices, building organizations in different states. But one of the things he did that was very different was he spent an enormous amount of money on early television, particularly in states voting after New Hampshire. The night of the Iowa caucuses, he had already spent \$3.5 million on television alone in states that were going to be voting after New Hampshire, under the theory that we'll get a bounce out of a victory in New Hampshire and this will create consonant waves. We'll have our media wave going and then we'll have a wave of media attention out of our win in New Hampshire, and the two waves will conjoin and create this amplitude effect that will surge to the nomination.

Well, one of the things I think that's most interesting about some of the data that Adam's producing is that it shows that the other theory of nomination campaign strategies, which is the theory that has generally been used--that a lot of early media in states after New Hampshire is in some ways wasted money because whatever happens in Iowa and New Hampshire is going to flush out all of that base or information that you've given to the electorate--seems to be the case. They're not focused on the race yet, they're not going to make their voting decisions based on information they get in December or the first week of January, and therefore it doesn't pay to spend a lot of money on television in those states.

Howard Dean took that risk. And one of the problems he faces now is that he doesn't have the reservoir of cash he needed to compete in these states that are voting now. And I think that, Adam's point is very important. For the most part, if you're not the front runner right now and you're riding that surge--and, we talked about this last time, my theory of brush fire candidates: if you can catch a wave in Iowa and New Hampshire, you can catapult yourself to the nomination--we're seeing that with John Kerry.

But if you look, most of these campaigns, even the Kerry campaign, are doing very modest media buys in these states because that's all the available cash they have. A candidate who had three or four million dollars to spend right now on television could be much more competitive. But because Howard Dean didn't have that reservoir, he's literally gone dark for two weeks at the most important time in the nomination process. It is mind-numbing to me that he has gone off television until Wisconsin--at this stage in the race, where the only media attention he's getting is essentially bad attention, and therefore he's not getting a whole lot of his own message out there.

And the reason why he's doing that is not because he doesn't have money.

In fact, I'm surprised at how well his fund-raising has held up. He's raised about \$3 million since Iowa. But when you create such a big organization, it consumes lots of cash. He's got a lot of office leases out there, a lot of telephones. It costs money to keep the candidate traveling around--as we used to say, to keep the plane in the air. You've got polling bills that are coming in, you've got all your bills coming in that haven't yet been paid in Iowa and New Hampshire. And as a result, there's not enough free cash, with Dean having made the decision that he doesn't want to drive the campaign into debt to do television and to do more active broad campaigning.

The candidates who win are the candidates who get the money at this stage in a race. And to that extent, John Kerry has a real advantage now. Just to give you some idea, the best day the Kerry campaign ever had in terms of Internet fund-raising prior to Iowa brought them in fifty to sixty thousand dollars. Since Iowa, they have raised almost \$2.5 million just from money that's come in through the Internet portal. In the 10 days after Iowa, they had done \$1.6 million. So they got this huge surge that has allowed them to do two things: one, campaign in every state; two, purchase media in every state, at a time when \$400,000 in TV makes a big difference. And as a result, they're in a position now where they're the only campaign actively and aggressively campaigning in every state. They're the only campaign on television in every state. And that pays real benefits in terms of the accumulation of delegates.

It shows you the problem that the other candidates have. Edwards has done well in raising money. Clark has benefited from the public funding, which provided him with \$1.3 million on February 1 in matching funds that he accrued as a result of his little surge in January in the polls in New Hampshire, where he took in a lot

of money. And that's kept his campaign alive to compete in a couple of states. But they're now in a process where they're basically taking their whole bankroll and putting it out on the table and betting on one hand in one or two states, hoping that they can win to get some more money and to battle in another state. And that makes it very tough for them at this stage of the race.

MR. DIONNE: Could I ask really quickly--One of my favorite comments on politics was from John Kennedy, who, as everybody knows, won the narrowest possible victory in 1960. An aide to Kennedy was described as coruscatingly brilliant, and Kennedy said, You know what these guys don't understand is 100,000 votes the other way and they'd all be coruscatingly stupid.

And what I'm thinking of is the Dean strategy.

MR. CORRADO: That's right.

MR. DIONNE: And the way, when you described that wave theory, one could imagine sitting in a room and saying what a brilliant idea, that's really going to work. How do you judge that strategy? Obviously, it didn't work, so it's going to be seen as coruscatingly ineffective. But did that make any sense? In other words, if you had been sitting in the Dean campaign on January 1st, what would you have done about that money? Or what do you think would have been a rational thing to do? And did that strategy make some sense?

MR. CORRADO: Well, I think that the underlying strategy made sense. I think that what the real issue was there was should you bank everything on just that one strategy and at least not have some reserve. I mean, given the fact that they had \$10 million in cash sitting there at the beginning of the year and they did very well in fund-raising in January, they were in a position where there was no reason why they couldn't

have a \$3-5 million reserve to then really stick it to their opponents after New Hampshire. Because they spent a sizable amount on the wave theory.

I guess where I would have differed from them is it made sense to me to go and start up in South Carolina, Arizona, New Mexico, because these were places where, if Dean had not done well in Iowa, and New Hampshire he should have done well there and it was his opportunity to really go after Edwards.

What I don't understand was all the money they were spending in places like Washington and Michigan and the states even a further week out. Just because, E.J., if the wave theory works--and I'm actually a believer in the wave theory, so I don't think it was a bad strategy--that a victory in New Hampshire would have propelled them right through the February 3rd states and then that would have propelled you for the next week and a half or so. You know, you didn't need to start spending so much money in those states back in December and January, especially on television. Because if the wave theory works, you really only need it to work on February 3. And then, as you see with John Kerry now, the media attention you'll get will flush you through the next five or six states.

MR. DIONNE: Anna, Dean calls you up on January 1st. What do you make of all this when you look back on the way he ran the campaign? And broaden it out just to say, you know, how did he go from here to here? And can he get back--you know, can he come back up at all?

MS. GREENBERG: Well, I'm not--I'm not someone who spends a lot of time handicapping the primaries, in part because I wasn't working for any of the campaigns, so I took that as a pass on having to pay really close attention to it. But I take it, I mean, since I do public opinion and not fund-raising and that sort of thing--I

actually look at his comments about Saddam Hussein as sort of the beginning of the end for him. And I think that, you know, while part of what made his candidacy exciting and generated sort of some new support, people who hadn't been, sort of in politics before, you know, young people contributing through the Internet, et cetera, was his opposition to the war. I think he needed to do a better job understanding sort of the American psyche about the war.

And I think that, you know, both the Saddam Hussein comment and the Osama bin Laden comment, which were, you know, maybe technically correct and somewhat legalistic, betrayed, I think, an utter lack of understanding of how important it was to Americans to find Saddam Hussein, to not fail in Iraq, to not be embarrassed internationally, a whole set of different issues.

So, if I were advising him, I would have talked to him about how he talked about his opposition to a war in a way that, you know, was more in touch with how America thinks about it.

MR. DIONNE: Tom.

MR. MANN: I do think we had a sort of testing of Howard Dean in this period. We saw his testing as a strategist on January 1 through how to allocate his resources. We also, earlier, saw his handling of his front-runner status. I mean, this was the extraordinary insurgent candidate who by the fall, because of his fund-raising and enthusiasm of his activists, had become the front-runner. And he found it a somewhat awkward position. And it was very difficult keeping the fire with the activists, but also garnering the endorsements from the unions and the major politicians. And then, he failed to substitute a kind of positive agenda that wasn't strictly anti-Bush, that sort of filled in the gaps and looked presidential. And, as Anna suggested, he made some

comments that were literally true but not--do not speak well of someone aspiring to be a trustworthy president, sort of put him in some difficulties.

By January 1, he had encountered some fairly substantial bumps. And so, there were reasons to believe that Iowa may not be a walk in the woods for him. Gephardt was still doing well and there were signs that Kerry was very positively viewed by Iowa activists and, therefore, Dean couldn't be certain about the outcome there. And you would have said a prudent politician and leader would have planned for that in some way.

Now, the one thing we'll never know, because you can't rerun history, is the extent to which the "I have a scream" speech and the unfair way in which that was presented again and again to the broader electorate proved his full undoing. But I could imagine him absorbing a loss in Iowa, if he had saved some of his resources and not made the speech, and becoming, then, a more viable candidate in New Hampshire and in the subsequent round.

But we learned something about him in that process.

MR. DIONNE: And it was a walk in the woods and Ronald Reagan was right there was a big bear in the woods-- I want to turn to--I want to ask Adam something and then I want--do we have mikes going around the audience so if--please start considering what you want to jump in with. But I want to turn to Adam, who covered, I think I'm right about this, John Connolly and his \$12 million delegate, who's actually looked at a lot of campaigns that dumped a lot of resources fairly early, Birch Bayh comes to mind; possibly, Scoop Jackson--how do you--what do you make of this?

And then I want to piggyback onto that a completely unrelated question, which is, when you look at this data and listen to what everyone has said, John Kerry

seems, at this point, to have very broad support that is not very deep at all, because it's not rooted in a whole lot of knowledge. And, so, it makes you wonder, one, what are his remaining vulnerabilities in there process; and two, what do we really know about his electability, but I'd be curious if you could reflect on your experience watching campaigns dump a lot of money out the door.

MR. CLYMER: Well, I don't quite agree with the support, thinking that it was a good bet. South Carolina, yes because there was a candidate there who was saying--there was a campaign in South Carolina. There really wasn't a campaign anywhere else. And I don't think television ads are worth anything like what they cost if the people are aimed at don't--haven't come to the idea that there's an election going on in their state.

Now, in Iowa and in New Hampshire, that goes on for a long time. But in Missouri, it lasted for a week. And I don't think in Arizona or in New Mexico or Oklahoma or Delaware, there was any particular perception of a campaign, except among people, you know, like us. People who do have the time to figure out--time and information to figure out what is the difference between John Kerry's health insurance proposal and John Edwards' health insurance proposal? Normal Americans do not devote much time to that kind of thing.

And I think--I mean, I think television advertising is remarkably wasteful in anyplace where there isn't a considerable awareness that a campaign is already going on. So, I certainly think that was a mistake and I think, I mean, Connolly spent money on all kinds of things--a remarkable variety of stuff. In fact, his campaign manager, a good friend of mine, was given the title of managing director of the Connolly campaign,

which was--gave you something--Eddy Mine [ph]--which gave you something of a sense of the pretensions of that.

I mean, plainly, the ability to raise a lot of money is very valuable. I've always thought that what was more often the key was something that is sometimes, but not always, derivative of that and that is which candidate had the best organization say, at the turn of the year.

Sometimes that's a function of money well spent and sometimes it's a function of ideas or loyalties or whatever. It's al--

MR. : --groups within the Party.

MR. CLYMER: --yeah, but it is also, of course, something that is exactly quantifiable, the way money is. So, considering current present company excepted, current trends in political science, only that which is quantifiable is paid much attention to these days.

As to--

MR. DIONNE: There's Kerry, I mean, you're looking at your polling in terms of Kerry is on this role and, yet, it would appear that the public knowledge is thin and, yet, he's still running ahead of Bush--how does one sort of pull these--

MR. CLYMER: Well, I think--

MR. DIONNE: --factors together.

MR. CLYMER: --part of the problem is what can you ask in a national survey about people? And what is it that matters to them? I think this is a remarkable year. Your point earlier about Iowa voters taking the role of old-time party bosses--I think electability, for all that we always used to talk about it here in Washington was not a real concern of primary voters.

They said, listen, this guy is best, I like him because of whatever, and, therefore, he's the most electable. Rather than putting it off on a certain--on a certain other plain. And I think this year, the Democrats, a remarkable number of whom are still furious about something that Washington has, by and large, lived past. To wit: The way the 2000 election was settled.

An awful lot of them are--I can't give you a proportion, but enough to really matter think Al Gore was cheated out of the election. Now, there's no Gore restoration movement. And, in fact, I think Dean's effort to enlist a has-been in American politics worked, you know, did him no good and maybe a little harm. But there is certainly a revenge motive on the person they think cheated their flawed guy out of it.

And, so, I think that what they--what the American voter thinks he know--Democratic primary voter--thinks he does know is that Kerry can beat Bush. And beyond that, he may not care about much else.

Now, does that mean that the press ought to devote all its time to that and not look into his record? Of course not, I mean, but we shouldn't necessarily expect that anything that is discovered by the press, the newspapers, television, doesn't do this--television, you know, you want to find out about issues--if you want to find out about the horse race, television's fine. If you want to find out at this stage of an event what candidates really are, television doesn't do it for you.

And that's where most people get their news. Although, fortunately, among primary voters, a higher proportion get it out of newspapers, not more than television, but more than the rest of the world does.

MR. DIONNE]: For what it's worth, I think Adam's right that there is a hangover effect from Florida. But I, actually think that what really kicked in the rage was the fact the Democrat's rallied to Bush after 9/11 and Democrats believe he used the National Security issue to win the 2002 election, so that he had an opportunity to heal that breach. And, instead, I think it actually ended up widening after because of the way in which events unfolded after the--

MR. CLYMER: I think that's more for pros than for ordinary voters.

MR. DIONNE: Although you look at these exit polls, I mean, when you look at exit polls that say, in many states voters were given a choice--they could say they were dissatisfied with Bush, but then they could say they were angry. And what you're seeing is a third to almost half of Democrats choosing--when they have a perfectly good option of saying dissatisfied, they actually choose angry. I wish we had historical data on this to see how unusual this is, but something, you know, it is pretty deep in the grass roots.

MS. GREENBERG: It's also he governed from the right without a mandate to govern from the right. So Democrats, when they see what he does on the environment, appointments in HHS around, you know, people on the reproductive health board who think that women should pray to get over PMS. I mean, there's so many different levels at which, he's governing in a way that, you know, given the way he won, that seems out of step.

And so, it's not just revenge, it's not just anger about 9/11, it's that everything he's doing is so far right from the perspective Democrats, they can't quite believe it. So I think the anger is kind of multifaceted.

MR. DIONNE: Tom.

MR. MANN: It's like: Why do Democrats dislike President Bush? Let the panel count the ways.

E.J., it seems to me that the electability question is two-fold. First, with the sitting President, is the referendum on his performance. And Anna addressed that, and her argument is that on a series of matters, that referendum could well prove negative or, at best, neutral; that--there's enough of a mixed quality to the economic recovery and enough uncertainties in Iraq that, in fact, this is unlikely to be a 1984-like positive referendum on the performance.

So, then, the second question is: Do the Democrats have a plausible alternative? Now, that alternative is, again, two-fold. It's partly: What's their message, and who's their candidate? Now, the message is one where they're developing a consensus. They're pretty comfortable, they've gotten a little more sophisticated. It's different than Clinton's message in '92, because the country's different and because they're reacting to four years of George Bush's administration. And I think that the broad message is, in my view, a plausible one if the referendum turns out to be either negative or, at best, neutral for Bush.

The question, then, becomes: Will the Democratic nominee as a person be plausible based on his record and what can the Republicans make of it, as well as of his personal experience, background and personal temperament.

Now, those are the questions one can ask about John Kerry now. And I think one of the reasons Democrats have gotten so caught up in the momentum and winability is a belief that Kerry's record as a veteran and his use of veterans in the campaign in his aggressive stance towards the president on national security will allow

him to neutralize the typical critiques of Democrats. But he also has a longer record, and the question is: Does that open vulnerabilities in the coming months?

MR. DIONNE: Go, ahead Tony, briefly, because I do want to bring the audience in.

MR. CORRADO: I was just going to say I think there's more than that because I think your initial point was well taken, E.J. This is very thin at this point. I mean, why is Kerry electable? Resume and results. He has a resume that looks like it would serve some of the Democrats' purposes in the general election. And he's been winning, so he must be electable.

When you look underneath that there isn't a whole lot of strong support upholding that at this point. More importantly, there are clear weaknesses on some of the measures that I always think are important. He cares about people like me; thinks like people, like me. Generally, the Democrats still choose Edwards on those measures rather than Kerry, that that lingering weakness about whether he's really in touch with the average voter hasn't been truly resolved yet.

MR. DIONNE: And we haven't even talked about what the gay marriage issue in Massachusetts may do, which we--I want us to get to. Going to the audience with this introduction. In Adam's fascinating numbers, it is significant, I think, that look at the number on "knew Kerry was a decorated veteran." That shot up in two weeks went 34 percent to 56 percent. And that may, if that is one thing that people know about him, it's going to create a powerful positive for him.

MR. CLYMER: That's the one thing the ads pound away at again and again and again--

MR. DIONNE: But this--

MR. CLYMER: --in every state, they're running the Kerry Vietnam footage in.

MR. DIONNE: And this must be media because this covers states--this covers the entire country. So, something that is being pounded in by the media, as well as by the advertising. Let's go to the audience and then everybody else jump back in.

Who, let's see. Let's do a couple at a time. Let's take these two gentlemen on opposite sides and then let's--both of you talk and then we'll come to the panel, then we'll go to this side afterward.

PARTICIPANT: The Republicans have already made it clear they're going to try to tag Kerry with the Massachusetts liberal label, which has worked so well in the past. Does the panel think that this still has a lot of staying power this year?

MR. DIONNE: I'm glad you asked that question, as Richard Nixon used to say. And then the gentleman over here, also.

PARTICIPANT: Okay, my question goes out, I guess to all the panelists. Regarding some of the Democrats foregoing government matching funds. And that type of strategy give the fact that Bush is just going to have an arsenal of money when the real one-on-one campaign kicks in. And also just wanted to hear your comments on Dean's comments this morning that he said if he doesn't win Wisconsin, he's dropping out.

MR. DIONNE: Anna, do you want to take Massachusetts liberal?

MS. GREENBERG: Sure.

MR. DIONNE: Marty Plissner, you gotta join this discussion.

MR. CORRADO: Because E.J.'s a real homer on this question.

MR. DIONNE: Right. I think it all changed when the Patriots won the Super Bowl.

MS. GREENBERG: We won't talk about the Red Sox. You know, I think this is--I think this is incredibly interesting. And I think one of the things that I've been writing--my father and I are writing an article about this right now for the American Prospect. And one of the things that we argue is not that these values questions don't matter anymore, but that, you know, 2004 is very different than 1988. I mean, 1988 was sort of the last election where these kinds of cultural issues, leaving aside the whole character 2000 associated with Clinton, which is, I think slightly different. Really were--was very important--the whole Willy Horton ad, et cetera.

You know, this country, if you look at just pure demographic changes is more ethnically diverse; the electorate's going to be a quarter minority this year. It is almost half unmarried and unmarried voters, men and women, but especially women are incredibly progressive.

It is a country that's getting better and better educated. And it's a country that's getting more and more urban, though there are a significant number of rural voters in the kind of so-called [inaudible] states this election year.

So, this country and when you look at, say, young people, people under their 30 and their views about issues like gay marriage and gay rights and all those issues, they're incredibly progressive. There are 20 and 30 and 40 point differences depending on the question between people who are under 30 and people over 50.

So, you know, it seems to me that there's a real danger, I think, for the Republicans and for the President, which I think they're aware of and which is why Bush has never come out and said he's against a woman's right to choose. He's never said it

explicitly and he's not said anything about it since the 2000 election. I know, because I work for NARAL and tried to find things that Bush has said about choice. And he, literally, has said nothing. Except for around PBA.

And, you know, on gay marriage. He's coming closer and closer and closer to saying that he supports a constitutional amendment, but he still has not come out and said it directly. And he always, you know, tempers his remarks about openness and we have to accept all people and everyone's a sinner cetera, et cetera.

And so, I'm not suggesting that this isn't going to be sort of a problem. I think it will be, but I think that there is a real danger that Republicans can go too far. And we can just look at the '92 Republican Convention and the reaction to Marilyn Quayle and Buchanan. And I think they have, you know, if you look at the NPR poll we did on gay marriage before the holidays--the argument that, you know, we sort of posed Republican versus Democratic arguments on civil unions. And we lost all of them, pretty handily, but the argument--

MR. DIONNE: You mean Democrats, in this case?

MS. GREENBERG: Yeah, versus Republicans. But the argument where Democrats actually were quite competitive with Republicans on the issue was, you know, Republicans going too far, private decisions, decisions about your family, what it should look like, that we don't want other people making those decisions for us, actually was evenly matched with the Republican argument about the sanctity of marriage and traditional families.

So, it's, you know, I don't really know. I think we have to wait and see how it plays out with Kerry, in particular. I do think the fact that he is a veteran and the

way he has been talking about his life and his what he did in Vietnam and the people he has around him, is a very powerful antidote to this kind of "he's too liberal."

And I think that we will see that, obviously be very important in [inaudible] campaign. I don't think we can underestimate, you know, 20 percent of people in this country are veterans. And if you look at people over, you know, seniors, about 50 percent are veterans. This is a very, very important block of voters and it's a very conservative voters on these issues in particular.

I think his veteran status is going to, in some sense, inoculate him from it, but I absolutely don't know, you know.

MR. CLYMER: Could I just ask, quickly, to Anna, the--I agree with you and Republicans, I think, agree with you, too, that if they overplay this issue it has negative effects for them.

On the other hand, it's pretty clear the gay marriage issue, especially with the word marriage in there, really splits the Democratic constituency almost in half in the numbers I have seen. And, I mean, that is, by definition, a wedge issue. It's hard to see, they're not trying to use it not in a big public way, but I can imagine it on radio, Christian radio, I can imagine this being used in certain ways, perhaps even within the black community, just to take a small piece of the African-American vote, because there's a lot of uneasiness among religious African Americans on this.

MS. GREENBERG: I don't think there's a chance that he's going to get anymore African-American voters. Because these issues, while African-Americans tend to be conservative on them are never political issues for them.

I don't think this is a wedge issue for Democrats, even if half of Democrats say they oppose gay marriage. I think it's an issue would kind of swing kind

of independent voters in states like Ohio and Missouri and some of these very, you know, maybe Iowa--though I think Iowa's not going to be hard for Democrats to win.

So, I think, you're right, it'll be under the radar. It'll be in these very socially conservative but economically kind of downtrodden states. And the question will be do the voters in those states think the fact that they've lost, you know, more manufacturing jobs than ever before and that they can't afford the health care, are these kinds of social issues more important? I don't know the answer that that question right now, I just don't, I have to wait and see how it plays out. But that--I think that's where this will become very important.

MR. DIONNE: Tony, do you want to take the second question?

MR. CORRADO: Sure, as far as Dean in Wisconsin, I think it's just a recognition of reality. If he loses Wisconsin, he has no viable option for the nomination and doesn't even have a theory of the nominating process that could sustain a candidacy.

In terms of the foregoing of public funds, I think that Kerry's decision to opt out of the system and use his wealth was a real gamble that paid off. I don't think he would have won Iowa without doing that. It gave him an infusion of money at a time when his campaign was basically out of funds. And I think that that now certainly provides some benefit to the Democrats—in that Kerry will be able to continue to raise money. And I expect that if he wraps this up soon, it's probably possible for the Democrats to raise, at least for Kerry, to ultimately raise about \$100 million during the primary session.

He's still going to be outspent by Bush by a large margin. But they'll certainly be able to compete being freed of the constraints of the public funding spending limits.

MR. DIONNE: That's a good point. I'm going to call on Adam and Tom in the next round of questions. You can jump in--we had a bunch of hands up over here. Could we take all four of you, sort of starting with that gentleman and just pass the mike around. And then, Marty, you've gotta jump in here at some point. Please.

PARTICIPANT: This question's for anyone on the panel. How important is competition at this point in the race for the Democratic candidacy? And do voters really want to see a Kerry/Bush competition for the next eight months?

MR. DIONNE: That's good, sir.

PARTICIPANT: I want to ask a question that really has two parts. The first is for Anna, I'm struck by the comment you made earlier that you're surprised about the extent to which this race has become so competitive so early. And if you could say a little bit more about that and I'm thinking, for example, I recall in the '84 campaign, relatively early, Mondale was ahead of Reagan. So, I have the feeling that maybe when you're saying it's more competitive you may be talking about more than just numbers, in that, maybe.

The second piece of that question is, assuming that your observation is correct that it is more competitive and more competitive early, comes to the question of why? And the question I'd like to pose to the panel is: Is there a way to measure the extent to which that is an issue-driven factor--jobs, economy, Iraq, foreign policy? And how much of it might be a factor or a reflection of what I think of as the most pugnacious administration, I want to say in history, I'm--in a long time. In otherwise, how much of this--

MR. MANN: Adam and I covered Teddy Roosevelt.

PARTICIPANT: I'm thinking about.

MR. CLYMER: The last time he ran.

PARTICIPANT: I was thinking about E.J.'s observation about the anger factor and how much of that--some of that is clearly about 2000, but there is this pugnaciousness to this administration and I wonder if there's a way to measure that?

MR. DIONNE: That's great, now let's go to Al over here and then there was another gentleman, right there, just pass it back.

PARTICIPANT: Does anyone think they know what Ralph Nader is going to do? Doesn't John Kerry, in more than one way represent what Ralph Nader considers the worst of the Democratic Party? With most Democrats less enthusiastic about Dennis Kucinich and with Wesley Clark's recent Republican past confirming what Ralph really believes what the difference between Democrats and Republicans really is. Doesn't all these factors suggest that Ralph Nader is going to run again?

MR. DIONNE: Thank you. I could hear Tom Mann saying, don't get me started.

[Laughter.]

PARTICIPANT: Good morning. With the concerns of electability, even if Dean had money, what could he do to convince mainstream Democrats that he's electable?

MR. DIONNE: That's a great question. Why don't we start with Adam and Tom, and they mix it up. And then we'll one more--yeah, we have enough time.

MR. CLYMER: Well, I think the main measure the Democratic voters are taking of electability is do you win? And it is not the Iowa deliberation now, you know, Richard Day daily re-encounter them in the plains of Iowa. But it's do you win. So that if Dean had the money and could win some places, I think people would start

saying, well, maybe--you know, beats Kerry somewhere. They've heard that Kerry is electable, well this guy must be even more electable because he could beat Kerry. I think at this stage that's what going into places where primaries exist for at most a week at a time.

Let me take a shot at Nader. I realize--

MR. DIONNE: In which sense do you mean that?

MR. CLYMER: Not the way Tom's going to do it. I think Ralph Nader has figured out that he cost Gore the election. And that the country is worse off as a result. It's very hard for him, I think, to express that or figure out--present an elegant rationale for why all the terrible things he's said about the Democrats, which he still believes, aren't as important as they were when he threw the election to Bush. But I think he's going to figure out a way not to run because he feels guilty. I don't know that he'll ever say it. I don't think we can, you know, we cannot use truth serum in investigative reporting. And so, I don't know that we'll ever prove it.

MR. DIONNE: Do you have a reason to believe that or is that a surmise?

MR. CLYMER: Surmise, surmise. I mean, I know him slightly, but, you know, it's a surmise.

I think--let me take at least one of the other questions very briefly. How important is competition among Democrats? It isn't so much the Democratic voter desperately desires a competitive race, but I think the idea of getting it over with in a great hurry was, aside from my earlier arguments about how it deprives voters of a meaningful opportunity, my have been a considerable tactical blunder by Terry McAuliffe.

They were in the manner of fighting the last war--well, in the last war the Republicans had a competitive race for a while and the Democrats were getting no attention because they had a five-week gap. And, so, not thinking that the Republicans weren't going to have a competitive race this time, they forgot about that or maybe they hoped McCain would run again, who knows. But the--I think one of the prime reasons for the good showing in the Democratic head-to-heads and all that sort of thing is, as television covers the campaigns and covers sound bites attacking Bush from different Democratic candidates, and, I mean, Bush is not getting much good publicity.

Now, some of it he's not getting for things utterly outside the power of the DNC or anyone else, unless you think Kay is an operative of McAuliffe's, but, the continuing race which puts candidates differing only in the adjectives with which they use to attack George Bush, gives the Democrats a lot of good publicity and hurts Bush. And if it could go on at a decent level of civility for four more months, that would be, I think in their best interests of getting elected.

At which point, so what if Bush has \$100 million to dump on ads attacking them. If these guys are on the news three and four times a week, that'll match it.

MR. DIONNE: That's very interesting, Tom--no what I was going to say in terms of the calendar is that what it seems like in retrospect is the Democrats had tilted the calendar so far one way that they had that huge gap and so, instead of a moderate third-way solution of shortening it but leaving some time, they just went way over the other side and created this unbelievably accelerated process. Tom.

MR. MANN: I agree with that in that I think a more extended Democratic fight in this particular year is good for the Democratic Party, partly because

there is not an ideological cleavage separating the candidates and the level of hostility and internecine fighting is relatively modest. Therefore, it provides an opportunity for Democrats to carry their fight to George Bush largely through the free media. And I think that accounts, in part, for Bush's sag in recent weeks.

MR. CLYMER: Tom, could I jump in for just half a second, with one other factor that I think has been largely overlooked. I think one reason that the media-- the paid media is not producing much in the way of direct attacks and negatives is that little one wide section in BCRA, which says the candidate's face has to be on there and he has to say, I approve this ad.

MR. MANN: Yeah.

MR. CLYMER: And I think that may be another factor that diminishes the use of paid media for splitting the party.

MR. DIONNE: Which was one of its purposes.

MR. MANN: That's right: I think that's correct. On the Dean question—and, by the way, there's a connection with the Nader question: you may not see it, but it really is there—my view now is that, if Dean had money, it probably could not buy him an ability to overcome the image that took hold with many voters coming out of Iowa and in that period of his front-runner status in the immediate aftermath of it.

You could say it's unfair, but it's a reality. That's when many voters learned about Howard Dean. Most knew nothing about him. And, remember, he never exceeded 25 percent in the national polls as the preferred candidate of Democrats. So, it was never an overwhelming lead.

The timing and way in which Dean gets out of this, assuming he doesn't spring back to life between now and the Wisconsin primary, is going to be very

important for him and for the Democratic Party. He does have a fund-raising base, an activist base, and it's important to have him as part of the campaign and not be a spoiler. And there are signs already that he's going to move away from his petulance of the last week or so to a more realistic posture.

I don't--it tells you the difference between Ralph Nader and Howard Dean, if it works out this way. I'm not nearly as confident as Adam is because--because I've just seen the kind of self-importance, if not narcissism, sort of overwhelming these kind of rational calculations. I mean, Nader's had an extraordinarily constructive career, but he appears to squander it.

It tells you the difference between Ralph Nader and Howard Dean, if it works out this way. I'm not nearly as confident as Adam is, because I've just seen the kind of self-importance, if not narcissism, overwhelming these kind of rational calculations. I mean, Nader's had an extraordinarily constructive career, but he appears ready to squander it.

So the final point about November--Anna's really going to answer this--is November really competitive, or does it just look that way because of the timing and what's the basis for it? I mean, I think Anna's right, the country is genuinely polarized. We haven't moved off 50/50. It's events that lead to rally effects for the president that then decline and come back.

Is there gravitational pull back to the 50/50? If events occur in a timely way for the President, they could be enough to produce a victory. A really robust job growth for four months, five months before the election. The capture of Osama bin Laden, a peaceful transfer of political power in Iraq. These things could make a huge difference.

But there is no clear, incumbent advantage moving in. It will have to be the timing of events that takes us off this 50/50 split.

MR. DIONNE: Just to preface what Anna's comments--one of the smartest Republicans I know, who is also a supporter of Bush, thinks there is a ceiling of about 55 percent on the President's support. Now, if the President actually got that 55 percent, that would be a very big victory, but I think that what it also suggests is that this is a--it starts out as a competitive race. He doesn't have a lot of room for error and if, you know, by this Republican will probably call me and gloat if, indeed, Bush gets 55 percent. But Ann, go ahead.

MS. GREENBERG: I guess I shouldn't have used the word surprised to imply some sort of historical, you know, analysis that this is unprecedented. I think I should have just used the word impressed, maybe. But I have thought for the last year for most of 2003, that the President was incredibly vulnerable and it was only certain events, as Tom said, that would sort of bump him up for a while and then he would go back down.

And, you know, every time that--every bump has been smaller and smaller, so 9/11's the biggest bump. Buoyed up to the war is a big bump, you know, and then going to war is bump, ending the war, but every bump is smaller and it takes less time to get back to where--back to 50/50 and, in fact, there was no bump at all from the State of the Union, which is, actually, unprecedented.

I want to bring up something that no one's talked about, yet today that I think is one of the most significant developments in the last few months that are going to effect this election, which is the FEC ruling on Thursday about the C-3, C-4s and 527s, well the advisory on Thursday.

MR. DIONNE: Could you just give a 30-seconds on the nature of the 5--

MS. GREENBERG: I don't fully understand it to be honest with you.

MR. DIONNE: We've got to be clear, it doesn't affect C-3s or C-4s, but--

MS. GREENBERG: It may--it may, it's not clear, I don't fully understand it.

MR. DIONNE: Now, for the second hour of our--

[Laughter.]

MS. GREENBERG: No, no, no, wait, wait, but-- MR. DIONNE: You're starting to sound like John Kerry was supposed to sound before.

MS. GREENBERG: But it relates to the primary ending. By the way, you know, we talk about this front-loading primary. But if I remember 1992 well enough, it was basically over at Super Tuesday, which was only a couple weeks from now, or three weeks from now, so it's not like this front-loading has made it so much different from the past.

MR. DIONNE: Just parenthetically, can I say, what we're talking about are the organizations that can spend money independently of the Party. There is a ruling by the FEC this week on how much room they have to spend money on television advertising, essentially directed against Bush. Tom will explain further, but let me--

MR. MANN: Then Tony will.

MS. GREENBERG: I may not fully understand it and I certainly don't think the press fully understands it because they've barely reported on it. I mean, there was, like, one story in the Post last week. But it bears upon this whole question of the primaries and the Democratic conversation, because one of the things that these groups are actually doing right now and have been planning to do depending on what happens

with this ruling, is doing exactly what the candidates are doing now, which is attacking Bush and having this conversation in a sustained way over the next four or five months.

Moveon.org has been on TV in West Virginia, Ohio, Missouri, Nevada, and Florida since mid-December and will be on through March. You know, our ad on right now is on prescription drugs, but, you know, it's all basically, you know, talking about, sort of, you know, dealing with the President.

And the media fund, which is, you know, Harold Lickey's sort of endeavor will also, you know, take on that sort of role, you know, if the standing doesn't sort of--if it doesn't hold--the ruling doesn't hold, you know, through whenever. So, I actually think, you know, the end of the Democratic primary does not stop this kind of conversation that's been happening if, you know, all plans work as they're supposed to on this sort of the progressive side.

I don't fully understand the ruling. My understanding is that it's more broad than just broadcast and it's more broad than just 527s. That it affects all communications about federal candidates, no matter if it's a C-3, a C-4, a 527, but I could be wrong about that. So--

MR. DIONNE: Tony do you want to--my view by the--and I want to ask Tony if--my sense is if Kerry is actually the nominee, then this ruling has less significance because it carries capacity to continue to raise money, whereas the candidates who are living under the existing system will not have that freedom or taking the matching money, will not have that freedom.

MR. CORRADO: That's correct. It benefits Kerry, because he can continue to raise and spend money. If it's John Edwards, he'll basically be out of room to

spend money and he will be dependent on the charity and help of others to carry his cause.

Basically, what we have now before the Federal Election Commission is a decision under the new Campaign Finance Law about the extent to which non-party organizations are going to be able to conduct what are considered to be federal election-related activities. And the ruling that is now before the FEC is a very limited ruling. It relates to political committees formed under Section 527 of the Tax Code as opposed to C-3 or C-4 organizations that are tax exempt, non-profit organizations and advocacy organizations, particularly, the C-4s.

And, basically, what's at issue is that there are three particular committees, the Media Fund, which was one you mentioned; Americans Coming Together, another Democratic progressive group; and Americans for a Better Country, which is a Republican group. These committees have been formed as political committees and have expressly said, they say on their Web sites that their purpose is to A) defeat George Bush or B) re-elect George Bush.

Since these groups admit that they are political committees and that their purpose is to influence a federal election, what is being considered at the FEC is whether they should be treated as political committees for federal election law purposes and, therefore, have to report their activities to the FEC and that their activities would be considered federal election activities that have to be paid for with hard money if they are doing advertising that promotes, supports, opposes, attacks a candidate.

It is different from the C-4s, because it doesn't get into some of the issues that C-4s are not principally committees designed to conduct political activities in

federal elections. They're set up for lots of other purposes. It is not these specific committees that they're focused on .

MR. DIONNE: Thank you. I want to bring in one last round and Tom if you want to come back on this subject. First Marty Plissner, it's great that--Marty was political editor at CBS News for a long time. I believe he organized the first exit poll ever and he is the author of a great book on media and politics. Marty.

MR. PLISSNER: Thank you very much, actually there's some debate whether Lou Harris or Warren Mitkowski did the first exit poll.

MR. DIONNE: Warren works with Marty, so--

MR. PLISSNER: Right, right.

MR. DIONNE: So, we'll put that one aside.

MR. PLISSNER: I may have analyzed the first one. But, first of all, this is just a minor irritation, I would like to deal with, because this is about the 300th occasion I've heard these axiom about Massachusetts liberals. I can't think of a single presidential candidate who was ever hurt by that description.

MR. DIONNE: Who's ever what?

MR. PLISSNER: Who's ever been hurt by that description.

Massachusetts liberal wasn't the term of derision till after Dukakis, I mean, he himself, was charged as a liberal. He became a model, but it wasn't because he was a Massachusetts liberal that he lost. Does--Adam, am I wrong?

MR. CLYMER: No, no, no, I'm just saying talk into the mike.

MR. PLISSNER: Oh, yeah.

MR. DIONNE: He's a television guy.

MR. PLISSNER: On Adam's gap, much as I admire the piece he wrote today, anybody who can bring Warren Herns into the current conversation has my vote. But the--you can't change the system every four years depending on whether there are one or two races. Having two separate windows as you had it four years ago, made for an impossible situation, the state party, state legislatures, it produced an awful lot of these early caucuses replacing primaries. Because the Republicans established primaries in one state then Democrats had to hold caucuses after their later window.

I don't think--as a matter of fact, that gap, that gap certainly worked for George Bush, four years ago. I agree this is a nutty system, but I don't think changing that will affect it.

MR. DIONNE: Just one quick last point because I want to get a bunch of people in before--go ahead, Marty.

MR. PLISSNER: No, that's--oh, I would suggest that the tone of this meeting seems to be that Kerry has it. I mean, I didn't detect any notion that there was any other possibility. I would point out to you that these--that there's a 15 percent threshold and if--forgetting delegates. And if a couple of candidates keep holding--keep getting past that threshold and can hold Kerry down to the 40 percent or so that he's getting right now, you could have a horse race at the last--

MR. DIONNE: Thank you, Marty. And, in fact, I'd like to use that, I'd bring in the rest of the voices in the audience but Tony, be thinking about what scenario could you construct that would keep this thing going. And you've had experience with campaigns that were supposed to end that didn't. And so I would like to respond to that. Also, did Ivo come in with news? Let's take all the question and then we'll close and we'll have everybody close up. Yes, please.

PARTICIPANT: I cut my teeth in Wisconsin primaries, therefore, I ask, what has happened to the potential for cross-over negative voting? It seems this is the perfect primary season for that to happen. No competition on the Republican side. And many more, even Wisconsin was the first and still is the most completely open primary. But in many cases you can re-register as you vote or in some cases, there's no registration at all to vote in the Democratic primary.

I think some people expected there'd be some significance, perhaps it would benefit Dean was often thought. I have seen absolutely no sign, no mention of this actually happening, does it show up at all?

MR. DIONNE: That's great. Who else, there were some other, yes, please. And then if you can come around to these guys, thank you, ma'am?

PARTICIPANT: As a clinical and political psychologist, I'm very concerned about the split in our country between the red and blue states. And, also, how the hatred and bitterness between the two-party promotes kind of black and white thinking and a lot of psychological manipulation. I would hope that the Democrats would have a better message, that it's not about the Democrats winning, but more about healing our country as Dennis Kucinich said in the last debate.

And last Friday night Bill Maher asked Max Cleland, why is it easier for Northerners to vote for a Southerner than for a Southerner to vote for a Northerner. And I think there's, you know, different psychology there and--well my question is, basically, there are a bunch of Republicans coming out, I mean, I think a lot of decent moderate Republicans are deeply concerned about what's happening, how the Republican Party's been hijacked by the extremes and people like Paul O'Neill, Kevin Phillips, John Dean, and I think I heard that Schwarzenegger was supporting Kerry, I'm not sure. But just in

terms of, you know, like, I think it might be easier to have Reagan Democrats, but could you have Kerry Republicans that may be harder to cross over or just a message to appeal farther across the spectrum, because I think if there's a narrow victory like a close victory the last time that the hostility is a real problem for our country in many ways.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you, that's a good question. I was grateful the clinical psychologist was expressing alarm for the country and not the people on the panel. Thank you very much. Let's see, right over here, we'll go right down the line here and then the panelists will come back.

PARTICIPANT: You touched on jobs growth which has been the missing component of the economic recovery. I'm just wondering, if we do see jobs pick up in line with what we would expect with this kind of economic growth, does that, how far does that go in inoculating Bush in the fall or do the Democrats still have an opening on other issues, like rising health care costs, the deficit, loss of higher-paying manufacturing jobs, that sort of thing?

MR. DIONNE: Right behind him.

PARTICIPANT: Two questions, one is about the 800-pound gorilla that you haven't talked about. And that is the illegal immigration issue and that is having a potential of splitting the Republican Party, I'm finding a lot of Republican friends are really furious at Bush about this issue and how--and it's a big problem for the Democrats. But a lot of Latinos are also--being from Southern California, a lot of Latinos are against illegal immigration.

The second is the wives. The wife race. And Kerry, Kerry's Teresa would be the only--only the second foreign-born wife of a President if she was--if he was elected, the other being Quincy Adams' wife. And she is a real lose canon, just

recently deigned to take his last name and--what do you think about that of her versus Laura?

MR. DIONNE: Those are great questions, and then lastly over here.

PARTICIPANT: This is based on Tony's comment about Kerry and how he doesn't seem to have--we haven't established a lot of support for his electability or, at least, we haven't given it a lot of scrutiny yet and that he may have some weaknesses in terms of connecting to the average voter and the question is, do you see any of that scrutiny coming up in the next few weeks and really the media catching on to that or if that's just gonna kind of go below the radar.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you very much. Why don't we start with Tony and Anna then we'll move through.

MR. CORRADO: That's a good question. I think that if you didn't have so compact a process, you would see more of that debate. The thrust of John Edwards' candidacy now is, I come from a different place, I come from a different background than John Kerry and that's the big difference between us. I understand the problems of the average working person much better than he does.

And he wants to make that argument identifying these two different personas--John Kerry versus me. And the problem is--

MR. DIONNE: It doesn't, just parenthetically, if I can ask, Edwards has a little bit of a problem because he has been running so much as the guy who's positive, doesn't snipe, as he puts it, at the other guys, that the--he's going to have to draw that contrast in a subtle way.

MR. CORRADO: That's right, and right now he draws the contrast in a subtle way by trying to talk about himself and his background as much as possible and that's always the clip he tries to get on the evening news.

The problem is, he doesn't have a lot of resources to spread that message right now. And, as a result, I think we'll see some of it, but most of the sniping will come from Dean. Since Dean only has one direction to go, which is try to get John Kerry to pay some attention to him, which means being more and more negative on Kerry, which will allow Edwards to reinforce his message, I'm running a positive campaign, I'm going ahead.

That means that in order to have the scenario you asked me to project-- how does this thing keep going? I think it's getting increasingly difficult for this thing to keep going because of the proportional representation of delegates in the Democratic Party. No one can go out and win a big chunk. The great things about a Republican campaign is that if you can beat the other guy, you get all the delegates. That doesn't work in the Democratic Party.

So, what you would need is, first of all, a number of candidates to keep winning other than Kerry.

Second, you would need the candidates who can only target a few states, like Edwards and Clark, to start getting smarter about the delegate selection process—and begin looking at where are there districts within states that we're not going to win, but that we can go and do really well in some congressional district and which might allow us to get more delegates than our state vote total would allow us to get. And that way, you take a few more delegates out of Kerry's pocket.

Third, someone's got to win a big enough state. For example, Edwards would probably have to pull off the Tennessee/Virginia daily double, as a way to at least get the super delegates to hold for a while.

MR. DIONNE: And as you know, the super delegates are the members of Congress, members of the Democratic National Committee who get automatic votes at the convention.

MR. CORRADO: The biggest problem right now, the biggest primary right now is the super delegate primary. They're are 540 to 560 super delegates who are still up for grabs. There's no reason right now for any of those super delegates to go for anyone other than John Kerry and the Kerry campaign, I'm sure, is putting a substantial amount of feelers and pressure out there to try to bring as many of these officials as possible into the delegate count in the next ten days to really boost their lead.

How do you keep those delegates from committing now? The only way is to find some possibilities of making the case that it's not really over yet.

And that's why I think Tennessee and Virginia are so important, because it seems to me that that's the place where Edwards or Clark can at least create a little more hesitancy in the process. I don't think Wisconsin is going to do it. I don't think that if Dean wins Wisconsin, it changes the calculus on him one bit. And I think it places him in a very difficult situation.

Because by the time you get to Wisconsin, over 900 of the delegates are now chosen and gone, you've already got a couple hundred of the super delegates that are committed and gone and, so, he's getting to the point where he's got to win a couple thousand delegates out of a pool of maybe 3,000 delegates and that is very difficult to do in the Democratic process.

MR. DIONNE: ANNA can I give you the last word? Can I go to Adam and Tom and then you can--and if everybody could be very brief because we've all run over. I just want to say, I think Wisconsin is very important, not so much to lift up Dean's--Dean will have a problem even if he wins. It's important to Kerry to win, because if Kerry wins Wisconsin, then it's very difficult to continue the race. If he loses, you get this huge primary with New York and California where all kinds of stuff could happen and no one has enough money to seriously buy, at least at this moment, seriously to buy media in New York and California. Adam and then Tom and then Anna.

MR. CLYMER: Well, of course California have covered politics on television during the Schwarzenegger role and the question, I guess will be, whether they like doing it enough so that they'll try it again this time or do they figure they used their quota for this decade. I mean, it's been remarkable in recent years how little attention television stations in California have paid to elections--

MR. DIONNE: Southern California, especially.

MR. CLYMER: But that's where there are more votes. I--one question that was put forward was about cross-over voting as a negative. I see no evidence that that's happened and I'm not sure that I think to the degree that Republicans are, perhaps, even more convinced than the Democrats that the race is over for Kerry, there's less point in going out in cold weather to cast a vote for Howard Dean or Dennis Kucinich or whatever in order to hurt Kerry, that it's too late to get it done.

Republicans for Kerry, not very many or, you know, the issue is not--is--this is an election where any Republican unhappiness may have a turnout effect. Both from the very conservatives who are made about the budget. Possibly among social conservatives who don't think he's forceful enough against same-sex marriage. I think

probably more from them than from moderates who, I think, while many of them are unhappy, they aren't going to find any convincing reason to go for a Democrat if they haven't before.

MR. DIONNE: By the way, I think a lot of the moderate Republicans converted to being Independent or Democrats from about 1988 to 2000 and you could see that in sort of shifts in suburban counties in the Northeast, Midwest and West. I do think there's an interesting question about the military and there are a lot of military people one runs into who are uneasy about the Bush foreign policy and that's where the veteran thing kicks in.

But I think the system has been organized in such a way that people will now say they are Republican are, to a significant degree defined as Bush Republicans. And there are some hold outs. I've run into them, too, but for the most part, we've had a kind of realignment. Tom.

MR. MANN: Let me say, E.J., as our moderator, you have to answer the question from the clinical psychologist about the message of healing and polarization, because E.J. has moved from "Why Americans Hate Politics" to his next book, which will come up in a couple of months called "Stand Up, Fight Back," so you can answer that question.

MR. DIONNE: Well, maybe I need help from the clinical psychologist.

MR. MANN: Let me say I think the panel has identified the conditions under which John Kerry could lose the Democratic nomination and it's all to happen between now and February 17. Basically, it requires one of the other candidates having a string of victories. To me it seems almost certain that John Edwards is the only plausible alternative. And that really means winning Virginia, Tennessee, and then

Wisconsin, setting the stage for a two-man show on Super Tuesday, where free media makes up for the impossibility, really, of serious media buys in California and New York and the rest.

But I think, even more, it requires John Kerry under two weeks of critical scrutiny from the media to stumble and to flub and to show a vulnerability that would get voters and super delegates asking the question: Does he have the staying power? Is that likely to happen? No. He's actually handled himself pretty well since he's become the front-runner, but he's not a natural and, therefore, it could happen and we ought to stay tuned, although it's very unlikely to happen.

Just let me respond very quickly--in defense of Teresa Heinz. Teresa has been a marvelous aide to John Kerry; she has given him some life and warm blood and some signs of vitality on the stump. And my guess is, to the extent spouses matter at all in elections, she will matter, like other have. She'll help in various ways and in her own distinctive ways.

I think immigration will end up not being an issue. It will go nowhere in this session of Congress. There are divisions within both parties. But Bush will not make any headway with Latinos because of it, nor, will he lose any of his conservative base because of it.

Final comment on jobs. If George Bush is fortunate enough to see the economy add 200,000 jobs every month from January to September, which is what we have in time, he will take the edge off the Democratic economic critique.

But it would not eliminate the economy as an issue because of the other dimensions of middle-class squeeze and concern about it. It would not turn into a

positive referendum on the economy, but it would neutralize the issue and certainly put him in a better position to win re-election.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you. Anna.

MS. GREENBERG: I'll just be a loyal daughter and be a shill for my dad's book, *The Two Americas*, which makes the exact point that you just made and talks about Democrats offering a vision and a bold politics and you can just get the book and read it.

On the jobs issue, I agree with Tom, but I also think it does matter what kinds of jobs are created. And when you talk to people in the manufacturing states, they understand and now Wal-Mart is the new bogeyman and it's replacing McDonald's, you know, and focus groups, you know, Jobs McDonald's has always--now it's jobs at Wal-Mart.

But, you know, it does matter because there's a--I think that for these voters, they think the real--those kind of basic social contract is broken. You know, they were promised that if they worked hard for the same company for 25 years at the end of it they would get their pension and they'd be able to retire and they could play with their grand kids and be secure for the rest of their lives.

And I think that they know that the new jobs that are being created are, you know, are not those kinds of jobs. And, so, even if there is job growth, it matters if they aren't jobs that would lead to kind of long-term economic security and most of these jobs don't.

I also agree with Tom that immigration's not going to be an issue, but I actually think there's a way in which it could actually cost him votes among Hispanic voters. Because I think there's a perception that he panders and he promises things and

he doesn't do them. And you have the first kind of Mexican amnesty question, which went away completely after 9/11. You have this particular proposal, which, you know, man on the street interviews on TV, apparently some sort of Spanish immigrants thought was a good thing, though I think they'd learn quickly when they have to go back after two or three years. They might not like it so much.

I think it's going to be perceived as another broken promise. And I don't really think that it's going to get him very far. It's certainly not going to cost him votes on his side, but it actually may cost him votes among Hispanics. And you know they spend an enormous amount of time worrying about these voters, they understand what an important block they are. And I think that they have miscalculated how to handle this important voting block.

MR. DIONNE: Thank you very much, I won't take up Tom's kind invitation, but thanks for the plug. I would just make the observation in closing that, we, in journalism and political science and the like often talk about, gee, things are so nasty. What's odd this year, I think is that the polarization, and that fact that there is anger on both sides, may have the net effect of boosting voter turnout. This is a prediction that will be easily disproved if I'm wrong. We're going to know. But I think you could have engagement for two reasons: One, is people think the outcome matters; and, two, if things stay as they are, people will sense a close contest, which also has the effect of boosting turnout; and three, if you put more states in play, that also has the effect, because people tend to vote when they know their state is competitive.

So, that is my one prediction and I promise I'll say I'm sorry if I'm wrong. Thank you all for coming and staying for a long session. Thanks to our panel.