



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on October 18, 2012

Debating the Debate and Immoderate Moderation

Despite all the scrutiny placed on debate moderation, Candy Crowley nonetheless managed to stoop to the occasion Tuesday night at Hofstra University. Yet, despite her best efforts, the 2012 debate record is still Democrats and the media 0 for 3. Unfortunately, the truth has been a casualty as well.

“‘Tis better to remain silent and be thought a fool...” You know the rest. When Crowley “corrected” Mitt Romney after he rightly said that Barack Obama didn’t declare the Benghazi attack an “act of terror” in the Rose Garden on Sept. 12, she sounded like a mother defending her little son’s lie in deference to emotional attachment. And while she would have to admit her error post debate, she had a rationalization at the ready: Romney used the wrong word. Yes, that’s right up there with her son Barry’s copout that gas prices were far lower four years ago because the economy was collapsing. But the problem wasn’t the wrong word — it was the wrong moderator.

Even with Crowley’s thoroughly modern *mea culpa*, however, much of the damage was done. What about the viewers who didn’t watch the post-debate coverage and are only as informed as Crowley herself?

The truth is that Crowley’s meddling was as inappropriate as was her presence itself. It was much as if Angelo Dundee had been the referee for the first Ali/Frazier fight and jumped on Smokin’ Joe’s back because Ali couldn’t hack it that night. She had no business doing the job of the judges (the post-debate analysts). And it was a role that she embraced only selectively. She didn’t, for instance, chime in and confirm that Romney was correct when he said that the Obama administration has reduced the number of permits for oil drilling on public lands.

Then there were the questions themselves, many of which seemed to come straight from the Democratic National Committee. The “assault weapons” question was, given the electorate’s current passions and priorities, quite anachronistic. And then there was the softball seemingly designed to help Obama shore up his waning women’s vote: the intersex wage-gap question. But the problem was an intellect gap. As I wrote earlier [today](#):

[Crowley] chose a question about the male-female wage gap, assuredly oblivious to the fact that women do not get paid less for the same work; they get paid less for lesser work. As Carrie Lukas points out [here](#), the wage gap is due to the sexes’ different lifestyle and career choices, not





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discrimination. It isn't surprising that Crowley would advocate for the feminist agenda, however, since her performance last night leaves little doubt she owes her position to affirmative action.

Then there was the question about so-called "assault weapons." Gun control hasn't been an issue since the 2000 campaign, when Al Gore's embrace of it likely cost him that very close election and the Democrats decided to find a new situational value. In Obama's case, this manifested itself in the statement, "I believe in the Second Amendment" (cue the Joe Biden smile and head shake). Yes, I'm sure, in the way the Devil believes in God. Anyway, Crowley undoubtedly doesn't know that what have been labeled "assault weapons" aren't really assault weapons, and, regardless, the Clinton-era ban didn't even outlaw those; rather, it prohibited the sale of certain semi-automatic firearms that had a certain combination of relatively inconsequential features (I explain this [here](#)). So you were conned, Candy.

There also was the guilt-by-association question directed at Romney about how we could be sure he wouldn't continue George W. Bush's policies. Why didn't they ask how we could be sure that Obama wouldn't continue Obama's policies?

And what of the illusion that was the debate's town-hall format? We're supposed to believe that the "people" got a chance to speak out through a group of "undecided" voters from New York. Well, I live in that state, so here's the straight dope. A lot of "undecided" NY voters are simply liberals who want to maintain a self-image of open-mindedness and objectivity; after all, open-mindedness is the sole virtue of the person with no principles. So what they do is convince themselves that they're on the fence and will give each candidate a fair hearing. In reality, though, a majority are just looking for some quasi-intellectual justification to vote their emotions and can be reliably counted upon for Democrat ballots in November.

It would be bad enough if these chosen people got to choose the questions for the candidates. But worse still is that Crowley got to choose from the chosen. So what's the point? The questioners at the debate were reduced to mere presenters, shells for the mainstream media. The only difference in having them generate question possibilities was that it made Crowley's job easier and provided her with ideas, of which she no doubt is quite bereft. But in the end we still had *one* liberal — out of a nation of 308 million people — deciding what questions would be asked in a presidential debate watched by 56 million people.

The media is 0 for 3 because they couldn't actually win any of the 2012 debates for Barry or Biden, but they did narrow the margin of defeat. So in the final analysis they're doing a good job — of trying to drag Barack Obama, while our nation is kicking and screaming, past the finish line.



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