



Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on August 31, 2010

How Big Was Beck's "Restoring Honor" Rally?

The "Restoring Honor" rally that Glenn Beck held in Washington this past weekend brought in huge numbers of people from all over the nation. Anyone who watched the coverage of the event could see that.

CBS News has a reputation of slanting the news that stretches back to documentaries like "Hunger in America" (which wrongly described the death of a child as caused by hunger) and "The Selling of the Pentagon" (which took the answers that an Assistant Secretary of State gave to one question and, through editing, made his answer appear to be to a completely different question.) One might think that the network could be interested, in a much more competitive news market, in gaining respect for objectivity. Apparently not. Obviously, the number of people who attended the Restoring Honor rally cannot be determined exactly, but must be based on estimates — though hopefully the various estimates would be in the ballpark of reality and not [vary radically](#).



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Congresswoman Michele Bachmann estimated that one million people attended the rally. [Beck himself estimated less — 500,000](#). The National Park Service, which has been ordered off the official estimate business since the Million Man March of 1995, gave MSNBC an unofficial estimate of 300,000. ABC News thought "over 100,000" attended. Even the *New York Times* thought perhaps half a million people were at the event. So what was the estimated crowd size according to CBS News? 87,000 people.

Photos posted by [Noel Sheppard](#) at Newbusters show that the mall was completely packed from the Lincoln Memorial to the Washington Monument. The [BBC photo](#), in particular, shows an overflowing crowd.

The actual size of the entire National Mall that the public could occupy is [11.5 million square feet](#) (11,500 feet from the steps of the Capital to the Lincoln Memorial and 1,000 feet wide). If everyone at the rally had 3.5 feet in each direction of empty space, then attendance at the rally would have been one million — Congresswoman Bachman's estimate. If the CBS News figure is correct and 87,000 people attended the rally, then each person in attendance would have 172.4 square feet or each person would be separated, on average, from the other attendees by 13.1 feet.

If each member at the rally had five feet of space in each direction — 25 square feet per person or five feet, on average, in every direction — then the crowd would be an estimated 460,000 people over the area of the National Mall, which was about what Glenn Beck estimated. Considering that in the photos



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of the crowds, large sections of the area photographed has people packed closely together, with less than five feet of separation, then that number is probably a low-ball figure. What is particularly curious about the CBS News estimate is that it was provided by an aerial AirPhotosLive. What is not curious at all is that CBS News, which has been completely unsympathetic over the years to the message Beck had at the rally, came back with an extraordinarily low estimate.

Photo: AP Images



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