

FROM FRONT PAGE

MOCK DEBATE

The debaters met with their respective debate teams between the panelist questions and the audience segment. The break gave the debaters time to talk about the issues and what can be done to take control over the debate.

After the break, Dr. Speel called upon audience members to ask questions to the debaters. Questions ranged from character questions to questions on government reform and constitutional rights.

Closing statements reaffirmed what will be done under their respective administrations, and

which Americans will benefit under whose plans. Webb challenged Sandy and the College Republicans to future debates to further discuss the issues.

A random survey taken after the debate showed strong support for Governor Bush's representative, Dave Sandy. A majority of the students attending the debate felt that Sandy won the debate, which could have been influenced by the turnout of members from the College Republican organization.

Previously undecided voter Kim Burkey stated, "I feel that the participants researched the candidates

and issues well. The mock debate finalized my decision on who I will vote for."

Dr. Speel commented on the debate saying, "I thought it went very well. The panelist and audience questions were excellent." He added, "the two debaters presented the candidates' positions well, and thanks to the organizers, the event went very smoothly."

The debate began at 7:30 p.m. and ended at 9:00 p.m. Future debates between the College Democrats and College Republicans are currently being planned.

Panel of ten undecided student voters take in information at Behrend's mock debate

by Katie Galley
editorial page editor

Students that attended this week's mock debate got a small sample of the issues that the presidential candidates stand for. Many of the students in attendance were undecided on who they should vote for and they reaped the benefits of the debate.

A small focus group of students were sitting in the audience this past Wednesday night and were polled before, during and after the debates. These students were asked a myriad of questions ranging from if the debate had swayed their thinking about where the candidates stood on issues to who had won the mock debate. The results were shown to favor one candidate more favorably

than the other.

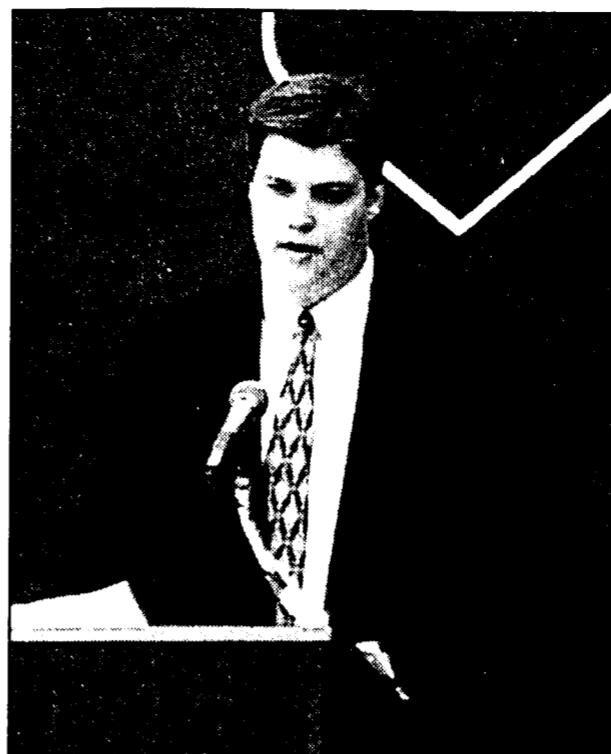
Students in the focus group were asked in the beginning of the debate if they favored Vice President Al Gore or Texas Governor George W. Bush. The results were that only one of the students reported that they had a slight favorite going into the mock debate.

At the intermission break, before the audience question and answer session, students were then polled on the candidate that they would most likely vote for, with one person for Gore, one person still undecided and six people for Bush.

At the conclusion of the debate the students were polled for a final time and all the students reported that based on the night's debate, they would vote for Bush.

After the debate was over, the

group was asked whom they felt had won the evening's debate, and all eight students said that they felt that Bush had won. Some of the issues that the students reported swayed their decisions were the military, social security, government issues and education. All of the students agreed however that even though they now favored one candidate, it was not necessarily the person that they would be voting for. They all also agreed though that the evening's debate between the College Republicans and College Democrats provided them with an opportunity to learn more about the candidates' platforms. "I learned more from this debate about the positions of the candidates than I learned from the televised debates," said focus group participant Kim Burkey.



TOP LEFT: Steve Webb takes on the role of Vice President Al Gore at Wednesday's debate. ABOVE: Dave Sandy represented Texas Governor George W. Bush and was seen as the winner by a random survey. LEFT: State Senator Jane Earl laughs as the candidates "play the role" of the presidential candidates. Earl commented on how well prepared and informed both candidates were for the debate.

A reminder for students as election approaches

by Caryn Rousseau
October 18, 2000
TMS Campus
Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON -- Analysis: On most college campuses this November 7 students will get an excuse to party. But will we be celebrating for the right reasons?

Outlined below are the higher education proposals for both Republican candidate Gov. George W. Bush and Democrat candidate Vice President Al Gore. This is what the would-be presidents are planning to do that will affect students' lives more than any Supreme Court nomination or foreign policy initiative.

Looking at the four members of the main tickets is like taking a tour of the Ivy League. Gore has a journalism degree from Harvard and vice presidential hopeful Joe Lieberman went to Yale Law School. The Republicans are a bit more diversified with Bush attending Yale and receiving an M.B.A. from

Harvard. Dick Cheney has a Master's from the University of Wyoming. These are some highly educated guys and they all agree that we should be too. However they don't agree on how to help us get that cap and gown.

Gore could easily rest on the Clinton administration's laurels -- student loan defaults are down, Pell Grants are up 52 percent and HOPE Scholarships are more accessible -- but he isn't. Gore has his own ideas that center around making college, graduate school and job courses even more affordable for middle class families.

He proposes the College Opportunity Tax Cut that would give students a choice between a tax deduction or a 28 percent tax credit on up to \$10,000 in tuition. Similar to 401k retirement planning, Gore wants to establish 401j tax-free college savings accounts that would allow employees and employers set aside funds for continuing education. In addition Gore's National College Tuition Savings plan would allow families to save infla-

tion-free and tax-free. The plan would increase access for families to state and private savings programs.

The crown jewel of Gore's plan is to provide \$10,000 in college aid and expanded loan forgiveness for about 860,000 students who plan to teach in high-need areas after graduation. The funding also would extend to students who teach subjects with a shortage of teachers, such as math, science and special education.

The Democrat's Direct Student Loan Program has made loans more affordable and college more accessible and Gore promises to continue support for programs like GEARUP and TRIO that benefit at-risk students. Such programming provides opportunities for students that do not exist now.

Bush's higher education proposals are just as beefy but less accessible. Bush would increase Pell Grants for low-income students who take AP courses in high school. However the accessibility of such course work in

low-income areas is questionable. Bush's Pell program would increase the amount of grants from \$3,100 to \$5,100 for first year students. What students will do without the funding for the rest of their college careers is unclear.

Bush would give states \$1.5 billion over five years to cover 1/3 of the cost to set up merit scholarship programs. These programs would establish college scholarships for students who take college-prep classes in high school. The program would be based on similar criteria in Texas' school systems.

Similar to Gore, Bush would make college savings accounts tax exempt. He also would allow families with incomes up to \$150,000 contribute \$5,000 per child annually and withdraw those funds tax-free for education use.

But how much of the federal budget really is spent on education programming? How much of an economic impact will education policy have for students?

Of next year's estimated \$1.9 trillion federal budget Congress gets to appropriate \$319

billion for nonmilitary public programs. This \$319 billion is divided up 12 ways with education receiving funding under one area -- Labor and Health and Human Services. Earlier this year Education Secretary Richard Riley asked Congress to spend \$40 billion on education. That's \$4.5 billion or 12.6 percent more than last year.

To put this into perspective, the military receives about \$296 billion from the feds, while higher education will share \$40 billion with all other education-related programming. And that's just what Riley would like to see spent -- the figure will no doubt falter up or down.

Now if we elect either Gore or Bush, will the respective candidate's programs and funding allotments automatically make students' lives easier? Of course not. Congress needs to approve these programs and partisan bargaining will alter the candidates' original platforms -- no matter which party is in the majority or the White House.

FROM PAGE 5A

TARGET STATES

discuss so-called "kitchen table issues" -- sometimes in homes, sometimes in workplaces, schools or parks.

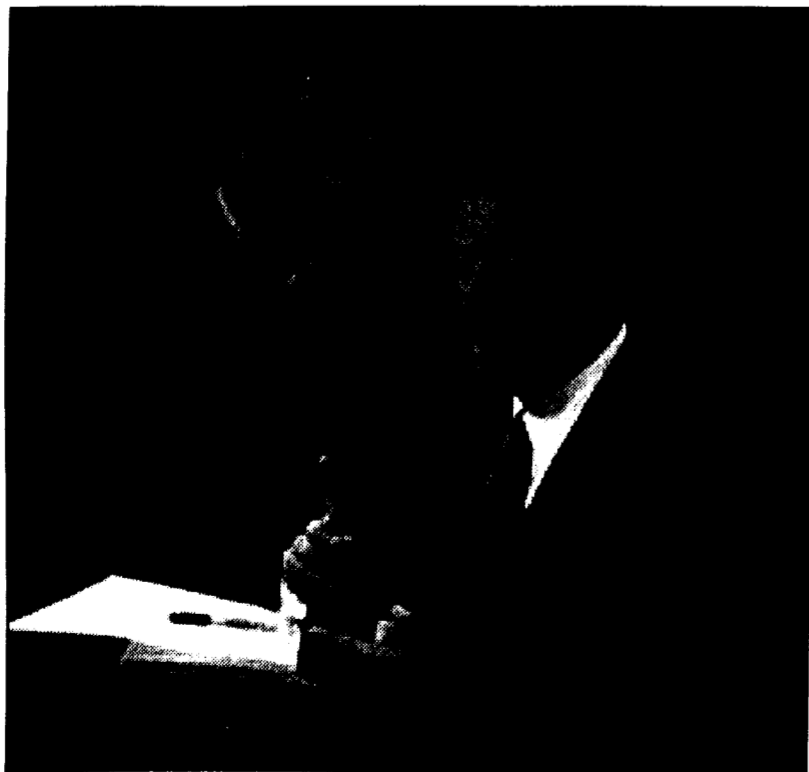
In the debate here Tuesday night, Gore talked at length for the first time about how well off the country has been under the Clinton administration. Advisers said he waited intentionally until the end of the campaign to spread that message.

"I think three weeks of doing this intensely is the right amount of time," senior Gore strategist Tad Devine said. "This is the final building block in the process ... the most powerful one."

Political analysts said the series of televised exchanges changed few minds, although it did allow both candidates to address some of the negative perceptions each faced.

Stuart Rothenberg, editor of a non-partisan political newsletter in Washington, said the debates likely "accomplished a bit more for Bush than for Gore only because there were more question marks for Bush. I think he established that he possesses at least the minimum qualifications for being president."

Gore, on the other hand, had three very different debates: one where he was overly aggressive, one where he



Gore didn't hold back in the third and final debate. Polls show that Gore's methods proved both effective and ineffective.

was timid and exaggerated his record and one where he got it all together, Rothenberg said.

"Gore has tried during the debates to draw distinctions on issues," he

said. "He was effective in the third debate ... I still think Gore needs to convince voters that Bush is a risky choice."

POLITICAL RHETORIC

and California have comparably large numbers of people without health coverage.

Over the past two years Texas also has been enrolling poor children in the federal Children Health Insurance Program more aggressively than other states.

In a related exchange, Gore said pharmaceutical companies spend more on advertising and promotion than on research and development. According to a Kaiser Family Foundation, the industry spent up to \$8.3 billion on advertising and promotion in 1998, and \$21 billion on research and development.

SPENDING

ASSERTION: Bush said Gore is proposing "the largest increase in federal spending in years."

FACTS: This is probably true, since the federal budget was running huge deficits in most recent previous presidential elections, and that kept a lid on spending proposals. Now, surpluses are expected for the next 10 years and both candidates would increase spending. Gore has proposed \$870 billion in new spending. Bush would increase spending by \$475 billion.

ASSERTION: Gore said that federal government shrank in the last five years under the Clinton administration, while Texas government grew.

FACTS: Texas government grew, while federal civilian employment shrank to 2.7 million in 1999 from 3 million in 1993, when Clinton-Gore took office. Federal spending, adjusted for inflation, increased from \$1.6 trillion in 1996 to an estimated \$1.7 trillion this year.

TAXES

ASSERTION: Gore said that Bush's tax cuts disproportionately favor the wealthy. Bush said that the wealthy will pay a bigger share of the tax burden than they do today.

FACTS: Both are correct. Bush will give tax cuts across the board to all taxpayers. The wealthy pay far more in taxes than the rest of the country, so they will get the largest dollar decrease in their taxes.

Over the first four years, 28 percent of Bush's income tax cut would go to those earning at least \$200,000 a year, according to an analysis by the congressional Joint Committee on Taxation, whose non-partisan technical staff serves both parties.

But many less-well-off taxpayers

will see a larger percentage cut in their taxes. So they will in fact pay a slightly smaller piece of the overall tax pie under Bush's proposal.

GUN CONTROL

ASSERTION: Bush said that he supports gun rights as a means for self-protection, while Gore said he has proposed gun control measures that will end the flood of cheap handguns to criminals without affecting the rights of hunters and target shooters.

Bush signed legislation making it legal for Texas residents to carry handguns for self-protection. But there is considerable debate about whether such measures actually enhance public safety. While several academic studies have suggested that granting citizens the right to carry handguns deters crime, police organizations deeply oppose such measures, saying that they result in too many handguns in the hands of people who are not qualified to use them.

Gore said that his gun control proposals will not affect the rights of hunters and sportsmen. But, since he would require owners of handguns to be licensed, they would make it harder for some target shooters and hunters to obtain firearms.