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Kerry, God Help Him, Cares About The Issues

by Michael in New York on 9/27/2004 02:46:00 AM

The Sunday New York Times did a lengthy piece [about Kerry and what he's like](#). It describes a man who asks probing, thoughtful questions, constantly reaches outside his inner circle for the opinion of others and -- when it comes to the election campaign -- is clearly the man in charge.

"Mr. Kerry reads briefing books and newspapers in the morning (often grousing about stories critical of him), watches television interview shows like Charlie Rose's late at night (sometimes leaving phone messages for his friends who appear as guests, offering critiques of their performances) and dials senators and old friends at all hours. At meetings, Mr. Kerry poses contrarian questions in an often wandering quest for data and conflicting opinions, a style that his aides, sometimes with a roll of the eyes, call Socratic."

Compare this to their description of Bush:

"For better and for worse, Mr. Bush takes his counsel from a small, unchanging group of strategists. His senior campaign staff has not changed in 18 months. Mr. Bush's hunger for information and conflicting opinions is limited. His management style is crisp and insular, and it does not change between easy days and tough ones."

Here's the kicker: this is supposed to be a weakness of Kerry. Yep, caring about the issues instead of caring about campaigning is bad.

"Representative Ted Strickland of Ohio said that during a recent bus trip through the small towns of the Appalachian region that make up his district, Mr. Kerry peppered him with questions about the way the reduction of import tariffs had affected the pottery industry -- not about the voting patterns in a state he is struggling to win back from the Republicans."

It's all because the "Alice in Wonderland" world of the media is more comfortable reporting on changes in behind-the-scenes campaigning personnel than on the issues, the facts and where the candidates stand on them.

But reading these two descriptions, who would you rather have running the country?



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