



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2004

## Kerry Missing His Target?

by Michael in New York on [10/19/2004 06:09:00 PM](#)

The NYT mildly conservative [David Brooks](#) is as milquetoast as they come and I usually find his articles pointless and annoying -- second only to Maureen O'Dowd.

But today's piece on Kerry seems on-target. Brooks says Kerry's latest salvos are fear-mongering. His particular points -- on Social Security, on the draft, on Mary Cheney and stem cell research -- I actually disagree with issue by issue. But Kerry's approach to them seems scattered.

He won the debates because he was measured and pointed and attacked Bush's incompetence. Bush's record is a shambles, so why talk about what Bush might do in the future? Attack Bush again and again for what he's already doing and his refusal to face reality.

Kerry should have gotten DAYS of mileage out of that Iraqi scandal where Bush let insurgents spirit away massively heavy equipment and material needed to make nuclear weapons. That happened AFTER the invasion and over months if not longer. It's an absolute scandal, points up Bush's incompetence and highlights the area where Kerry is strong. Not fighting terror, which is an amorphous idea, but fixing the mess in Iraq.

Brooks writes, "But there is a deeper assumption, which has marred Democratic politics for years. Some Democrats have been unable to face the reality that people have been voting for Republicans because they agree with them. So these Democrats have invented the comforting theory that they've been losing because they are too virtuous for the country.

"According to this theory, Republicans - or usually some omniscient, omnipotent and malevolent strategists, like Lee Atwater or Karl Rove - have been tricking the American people into voting against their true interests. This year, many Democrats decided, we'll be vicious in return.

The truth, however, is that voters are not idiots. They are capable of independent thought. If you attack your opponent wildly, ruthlessly, they will come to their own conclusions."

Brooks is right. You don't beat the Republicans by fighting just as sleazily. You beat them with sober facts and calm, consistent leadership.



JOHN'S PHOTOS



## HOT OFF THE WIRE

### Daily Kos

Open Thread and Diary Rescue - \*Tonight's Rescue Rangers are Louisiana 1976, jlms qkw, shayera, dopper0189, ybruti, and srkp23 with vcmvo2 editing.\* ~ World order will be secured only ...  
5 minutes ago

### Eschaton

The Stupids - When I was growing up what always pissed me off more than anything was when my sense of justice was violated. I'm not claiming that my sense of such things...  
37 minutes ago

### Crooks and Liars

Open Thread - Blog Against Theocracy, a blogswarm in favor of separation of church and state, is this weekend. Open Thread below.  
55 minutes ago

### HuffPost Politics

Norman Solomon: Democrats and War Escalation - Top Democrats and many prominent supporters - with vocal agreement, tactical quibbles or total silence - are assisting the escalation of the U.S. war effort...  
1 hour ago

### Firedoglake

Late Nite: Michele Bachmann Stars in "Birth of an Aberration" - Minnesota's wackiest export treads the boards of the Wingnut dinner theater.  
1 hour ago

Show All

AMERICABLOG TV

Next 6