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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2004

## The Election Will Not Be Televised

by Michael in New York on 9/24/2004 03:11:00 AM

Another story, this one from the LA Times, about the travails of all those [faulty computer voting machines](#).

Now, here's a prediction: we won't know the winner of the election on Election Day. No, I'm not predicting another Florida-like imbroglio, though that's hardly out of the question. But a lot of factors make me believe it will be days if not longer after the election before a winner is agreed upon.

1. Both parties are encouraging absentee ballots - especially in battleground states like Florida. Absentee ballots take longer to count and don't even have to arrive by election day.
2. Personally, I believe Kerry will win substantially across the nation -- not by massive margins but consistently, a firm repudiation of Bush and a clear mandate for change. But poll after poll shows a very tight race in a number of states, so those absentee ballots might very likely hold the margin of victory if it is a close race.
3. Both parties are fielding a record number of lawyers and poll watchers, all of them ready to pounce on any irregularities and file court challenges.
4. The flurry of new computerized election equipment in the wake of Florida and the widespread problems with them in the primaries are going to crop up even more in the general election.
5. Black voters still seething with anger over anecdotal stories of pressure to stay away from the polls last time, of accurate reports of having their names improperly being removed from lists of valid voters, of accurate stories about state police in Florida being sent to "question" and intimidate elderly black voters are going to raise a holy noise at the slightest sign of similar tactics in November.

All of this will contribute to an election day with more challenges in more states to election results and more questions about whether tight races could be swung by the unknown quantities of absentee ballots and court orders for recounts and more and more confusion.

The result? We will NOT know who the next President of the United States is going to be on election day. Again.

You heard it here first.



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