

**Focus Group Guidelines**  
**August 9, 2006**  
**Exton, PA**  
**PA-06**

**I. Introduction** (10 minutes)

- Confidentiality
- Mirrors, audio and videotapes
- Respondent introductions

GAILE: I like to garden. Work all the time.

ELLEN: Also work all the time. I have 2 daughters.

ELI: I'm from Wilmington. Will be going to part time status, looking forward to that.

PAMELA: I have a 13 year old son and 16 year old daughter. I work a bit.

NINA: Work part time. Mom's taxi service is one of my part time jobs.

DEB: Live across the street. Married with 3 step children. Used to be an event planner, but stopped

DEBORAH: Working. Married, teach 3<sup>rd</sup> grade

BRENDA: Married.

DONNA: 2 children, work full time.

DIANNE: Don't work at all. I'm in my 3<sup>rd</sup> year of recovery from a stroke. I have 3 children and 6 grand children. Just visited most of them in Washington state.

**II. Direction of the Country** (20 minutes)

1. Thinking generally about the country, are things moving in the right direction or wrong direction? [**VERY EXTENSIVE – PROBE AND LISTEN**]

Wrong.

Wrong.

We are moving, but we are not going in any direction.

I see change. I think that with the election last night and the introduction of an independent democrat, party things are getting less partisan and more citizen friendly.

- What things are going right?
- What things are going in the wrong direction?

We are focusing on the wrong issues. We are not focusing on things that can be change. We are Looking at too broad...international issues.

We have starving people in this country. I know as a super power that's a necessity, but we need to focus more in this country.

We have leaders lying to us. There were no weapons of mass destruction. And I think they knew that.

The system is broken. The way we respond to problems in the world, the way we assimilate new people to our new country, the way we disseminate information.

It's good the ideals we are trying to promote in other countries, but there is no place as America in terms of freedom. Everyone wants to be here because of that, but we can't force everyone to have the same ideas.

Wasteful, horribly wasteful. Everything is becoming worse. In stead of recycling, sharing... We purchased refillable fire extinguishers and found out it is cheaper to throw away than re fill them. As a country we are more divided than I've seen in the 57 years I lived. Liberal, conservatives are going at each other. Television is promoting this.

I think the healthcare system is getting out of track. It's ridiculous; there are countries that offer free care. We are in this advanced nation and immigration is the first thing we can come up with. The welfare system is an absolutely disaster. Unless you have 10 kids from different...healthcare is a disgrace, an absolutely disgrace.

In the internet you can buy any medication cheaper.

It seems that you have to be rich or poor in order to get anything.

All bills go through insurance companies, there is insurance for all these companies and that raises the cost.

The whole system is broken and it's designed for insurance to make profits, huge profits. So obviously they are not interested in providing healthcare, they are interested in the bottom line. Other countries are worse in other ways, but they care for their homeless people and don't listen to the news that we are fed. Other countries don't have homeless people on the streets.

- **Probe national direction vs. local direction**

2. How about the economy? What's going on with the economy here in Connecticut?

- **[PROBE]** Rising prices (especially gas), employment, any inflation fears
- How did things get to this point?
- What direction do you think the economy will go from here – will it continue to get worse, will it start to get better, or will it continue at the current level?

3. Let's talk specifically about the war in Iraq...

- **[PROBE]** What are your feelings about our continued involvement over there?
  - **[EXPLORE]** Loss of American lives, cost, no plan or exit strategy, weaker at home

We need to live.

We needed to live a long time ago.

The problem is when we live, what happens to us? Will we be strong enough here when the men come home to protect this country. We are not leading with normal people. If we go, will this inspire the crazy people? At least now we are focusing over there and my concern is that if we leave there...

In the morning when I turn out the TV I am sure I hear nonsense.

I think we need to give ourselves a hard look. What causes people to hate us so much? I lived in Copenhagen and they care of their own people. My daughters said, we thought this would happen. They think we are crazy. They want peace, I know, and the whole thing is crazy. It's just that we are divided by parties, and religions, and oil.

I agree we should leave, but not before things are settled and the Iraqi army is ready to fight in their own country. I want us to leave, I didn't want war in the beginning but I think the US gets in trouble by going to these countries. They can't leave too soon, but things are too unsettled there.

They can't leave now, because civil war will start.

We are not preventing anything by being there. I don't know if other countries have helped up. Next thing we know there are other conflicts in the Middle East. If we start helping everywhere, I think it's a huge sacrifice.

4. How about the growing violence in the Middle East?

- What are the implications of this for the U.S. and the broader war on terror?

Chaos. What are they fighting for?

We don't get the true information. Only sound bites, little pieces. Both Israel and the Lebanese are proxy powers. Israel is used and have been used for 50 years. We could have solved the issue before if we wanted to. We are in Iraq for profit. If we spent the money on people rather than Halliburton...the British promised that land to the Muslim and then gave it to the Jews. No wonder they are angry.

5. **[OLDER VOTERS AND SENIORS]** How about the new prescription drug program through Medicare? What are your impressions of that?

My aunt lives with me and she is senior and it took 3 months for her to figure it out. She was about to throw the towel and once she did, it worked out.

She has the new prescription and there was no problem. But now there is a co-payment and now she is paying 7,200 in co-payment. I talked and they tell me people should contribute for their prescriptions. But if they are under 30,000 a year...I don't think whoever was the decider of doing this didn't think there are people that can't afford it. And we need to take care of those. I want to know why we didn't negotiate for massive discounts. The government is paying full price? The government itself, they didn't negotiate...

**III. Associations** (15 minutes)

1. Bill Clinton

Sex.  
Very intelligent.  
Best president we had, other than Kennedy.  
Good for the country.  
Well respected.  
Adulterer.

2. Rick Santorum

How he charged for school education.  
What is he thinking?  
I don't think he is progressive enough to represent PA. He thinks we elected him to employ his religious beliefs, but we didn't. He needs to speak for the people. I find him too conservative for PA, and I am conservative.  
I'm worried about the kind of power he is getting.  
He sent email to constituents about the ports. It wasn't qualified, he didn't explain the situation, he just inflamed it.  
He had an ad against Casey that was...It carried forward this kind of attitude that we can't work together that I don't like.  
But I believe they all do that.  
You don't know what to believe, because you get pieces in the mail and they say different things. So you don't know what to believe and need to do your own research.  
It is very difficult to sort it out.

3. Bob Casey

Pro life, maybe I'm wrong.

4. Jim Gerlach [**Extensive**]

I don't know much about him.  
I've seen TV ads.  
I've been contacted by him now that is time for election, but didn't hear much before. He has a website now, but didn't have a way for the public to email him before.  
He is in flames about the immigration issue. I think he is.

5. Lois Murphy [**Extensive**]

She showed up at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade and went person to person introducing herself.  
She looks intelligent.  
For some reason, I have the image of her being offensive and I don't like her because of that. I think it was from the previous election.

6. Congress

Decision makers.

Ineffectual.

Supposed to be a way to get things done, but it doesn't seem to. It is difficult trying to get through communications.

- Is the current Congress worse than in times past or is this just politics as usual?

**[Written Exercise – Handouts #1 and #2]**

7. Now I'd like to talk specifically about George W. Bush.

- What good things come to mind when you think of Bush? **[Discuss]**

Family man.

Hes's physically fit, knows how to enjoy himself, doesn't take himself too seriously. It's consistent.

He believes in the death penalty.

He'll be leaving office soon.

2 more years.

His father is his role model. He is experienced, and I share where he stands on moral values.

He is well managed. Might be more positive to Karl Rove than to Bush

The staff that he has chosen. They know what they are doing

- What doubts do you have? What worries you about him? **[Extensive]**

He is not smart enough.

He is perceived around the globe as being a dummy. It's a shame because he is quite smart.

Because his IQ is higher than Kerry's and Gore's.

I don't believe it.

Integrity. His ability to make decisions and grasp complexity.

He can't express himself properly. Makes me think he doesn't have a high IQ.

He has a way of not answering a question or answering part of it.

His roots are oil and money. That led us into Iraq and now there is confusion.

Doesn't exude confidence.

He has bad reputation all around the globe.

He was massaging the chancellor's back on tape. I don't think Germans even like to be touched.

He is kind of naïve thinking that we could stop terrorism with a little battle. He is stubborn.

I do recall him saying it was going to be a long battle.

Didn't he say the war was over like ages ago?

Years ago he got away with that because we didn't have. But now there is too much information and they are assuming that we are going to go with what they say.

He doesn't respect the checks and balances. And that's very scary.

**IV. Election 2006** (20 minutes)

In a little more than three months, we will have elections for Congress, so let's talk about the upcoming elections now.

1. Are you more or less motivated to vote for Congress this year than in previous years? Why?

I've always voted.

This is the first election where I think I need to read before I make a decision. I was raised in a family where you just vote Republican. But since last election I realized I can't vote that way any more.

With all these ads part of the research is knowing what is true.

I hate to say this because...I'm a republican. I was raised to be a Republican. When I was a working person, that made sense to me. But now that I am not working any more, I need to read. Look at voting records.

Look at how many times they don't even show up to vote so as not to be identified.

It's so hard to sort out the true facts. But I feel I need to do that. I can't vote any more the way someone says.

It's difficult to vote for Republicans because of their organization. But I came to think that the democratic organization is as corrupt. I don't want either of the clubs in charge.

■ **Probe on whether voting can help affect change**

2. For you personally, what is this upcoming election about? What is the most important factor that will determine how you vote for Congress?

Healthcare.

New ideas, what can they do that is reasonable. We need some kind of healthcare program. Especially as we get older. How is this country going to take care of us as we live to be 105. Why do we have a minimum wage of \$5.65?

Wasn't that attached to the same bill that cut inheritance tax and didn't pass?

But taxes can do that, and I think PA will raise the minimum wage. And education.

I think education is important. There is so much money, and how are we going to deal with that going forward? I want someone to be real, and talk about what we are going to do with all this. What are we going to do with energy going forward?

I'll probably vote more on local issues. I'm more nervous about what is going to happen with education. We need to get over this ridiculous NCLB. We need to flip education. So we need to be very careful that we don't end up with our schools in the same place our healthcare is.

Locally, stop building shopping centers. Damn it!

Who has the best plan to getting us out of the Middle East with some sort of sense of accomplishment?

■ **Probe on personal traits, but push through to issues as well**

3. So what are you hearing so far in this election? Have you heard anything from the candidates here in Pennsylvania, the candidates that you will be choosing from?

I hear Republicans paying for your vote.

I read about Rendell saying he is supporting Santorum when he should be supporting Casey. But of course Rendell then said he was supporting Casey.

I certainly read the article because I like Rendell, he is charismatic, he jumps in pools. I think it makes a huge difference when you meet someone and you can make a connection.

I think they are being pretty negative. In stead of saying what they will do, they attack each other.

4. What are the Republicans talking about? Why do they say you should vote for a Republican for Congress?
- Is this a compelling reason to vote Republican? Is it believable?
  - As you know, the Republicans now have control of the White House, as well as both the House and the Senate. If Republicans maintain control of Congress, will anything change in Washington?

Fear.

If you don't vote Republican, Democrats are instantly going to pull out of Iraq and there will be increase in terrorism and the world will be a much worse place.

I feel that the Republicans and president Bush is against progress because he won't vote for stem cell research. He can't separate what part of life he values. He wants to be pro life, but he is willing to send men and women to Iraq.

If you are not for Iraq, you are absolutely against your own soldiers, your own children.

5. What are the Democrats talking about? Why do they say you should vote for a Democrat for Congress?

Because they are everything bur Republicans.

Change.

Republicans say something is going to trickle down, but Democrats are going to have everyone have more money.

ANY SPECIFICS ABOUT CHANGE?

Actually, one thing I heard is 'wait till Barak Obama gets a little bit older'

Because it's not Republican.

I've never voted that way. I've never been a reactionary voter. Doing the research this year will be harder than when I was 18. Right now a lot is white noise until I have to force myself to sit down and make the decision. The last election I almost didn't vote, I didn't like any of them and that hasn't happened to me before.

- Is this a compelling reason to vote Democratic? Is it believable?
- If Democrats take back control of the House and/or the Senate, how will things be different in this country? What, if anything, will change in Washington?

- **Probe if there's any sense of sending Bush a message**

I don't think Democrats and Republicans are the same animal.

No. I think that's how it has usually worked. Reagan, I think he was great.

It forces the president to be more visionary, because he has to put forward other things.

Democratic party is more environmentally conscious and it would be good to have someone think what this planet will be like in 15 years.

- What are the consequences if Republicans remain in power?
  - **Probe on Iraq, Social Security, gas prices, health care, any other concerns that have been raised**

**V. Ad Testing** (35 minutes)

**[Written Exercise – Handouts #3-#9]**

As many of you have probably seen already, everyone’s favorite part of the campaign season – the television ads – have already begun here in Pennsylvania. I’d like to show you some of these ads, and for each one, I’d like you to do two things:

First, rate how this ad makes you feel about your choice in this election on this scale (explain scale, shown below).

<i>More</i>										<i>More</i>
<i>Likely</i>					<i>No</i>					<i>Likely</i>
<i>Casey (Murphy)</i>					<i>Diff</i>					<i>Santoru</i>
										<i>(Gerlac)</i>
<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

Then below that, in just a few words or phrases, tell me **in your own words** what this ad says to you – that is, if you were watching television at home and saw this ad, what would you take away from it?

<b>Casey - Economy</b>	
<b>5 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>4 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>0</b>	
<b>1 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>2 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>3 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>4 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>5 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	

- Felt good, he didn’t bash the other guy.
- Wonderful ideas. Everyone wants that, but how do you get there?
- He had a way of speaking in a soft way that sounded like he cares
- Lot’s of folksy little things that is nice. The only substantial think was the tax cuts for America.
- Didn’t he say tax cuts for the rich?
- I didn’t get a sense of ‘this is my ideas, this is how you find out my plan. Give me your website, or call me, or tell me here is my cell phone number. Have some kind of place of where to go for more information.
- Aimed more at a woman or a family. It appealed to us, we saw little kids and a small town. As opposed to standing out there behind a podium.
- Very low key. We saw a group of working men.

<b>Santorum – Oil</b>	
<b>5 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>4 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>3 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>2 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>1 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>4 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>5 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	

Frightening not to vote for a Republican.  
 There is a plan.  
 Good for the environment.  
 But it is something solid.  
 I think he was just trying to scare us. And he used that ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ he is pointing his finger at them.  
 How do we know that that is really good for the environment?  
 But that has been in the mind of people since the 70s.  
 I don’t like the shock value, it was violent, it was aggressive. He did give a cause and an effect. Here is a problem and here there is what I did about it. I didn’t like the opening, but the ad is effective. Now I just need to go and check his voting record. But with Casey, I had to...

<b>Gerlach – immigration</b>	
<b>5 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>4 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>3 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>2 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>3 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>5 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	

It’s a non issue in my mind.  
 I don’t agree with that. It’s just not what I think. There is no specific information. Vote for a law that can work? What can that mean? I thought it was a little racist.  
 He distances himself from the president. That surprises me. Of all the issues he could have chosen, he chose immigration and I don’t know how much that will help him.

But he talked about one issue.  
 He gave his opinion very strongly.  
 It disappointed that he doesn't have the guts to support Republicanism.  
 Either that, or he stands behind the issues he supports.  
 I like the moving images, he did more than one thing with the production.  
 It was bland, we had other things more important going on.  
 It's a non issue.  
 I think it is an issue and we are going to have to deal with it, how to deal with this non English speaking people.  
 Chester county is large because somebody brought the mushroom workers.  
 This is really bad, but when you go by any of the trucks of the landscapers hey are all Hispanics.

<b>Murhy – Attack response</b>	
<b>5 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>4 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>3 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>2 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>1 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>3 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>5 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	<b>1</b>

Didn't say anything about her. Just vote for me.  
 Just opposed against the other one, makes me find out about Gerlach.  
 She shot herself in the foot. She says, here are all the times he voted with Bush. But that is what he said. He said that when he agrees with Bush he votes with him.  
 Aren't you smarter than that? She is not showing the person I met.  
 When they go negative like that they don't provide much information about the candidate.  
 Why don't we have debates?  
 Didn't have much information about her.  
**DID ANYONE CATCH THE ISSUES SHE WAS TALKING ABOUT?**  
 Cafta, big oil, Medicare.  
 Big business.

<b>Chocola – Tax attack</b>	
<b>5 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>4 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>3 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

<b>1 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>3 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>4 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>5 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	

There was no position. Here are all the bad things they've done. I've done nothing. Where does he stand?  
 Higher taxes. Anyone that wants higher taxes is not someone I want to vote for. It said were they got the information from. It was well done because it could be checked where they got the information from.  
 That's a national run ad, so they are going to plug people's name. They are making the generalization that it's the party, not the person.  
**DO YOU GO AWAY THINKING THAT THEY WILL RAISE TAXES?**  
 No  
 that's the record, but people change their positions some times  
 It's just looking for people opposed to higher taxes.  
 I don't want to pay taxes but with this deficit we are going to have to pay higher taxes.

<b>Chocola – Oil attack</b>	
<b>5 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>4 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>2 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>3 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>4 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>5 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	

Yikes  
 First of all, who gave them 3,000 dollars? Oil and gas? That's like nothing. Are you kidding me? It wasn't addressed to intelligent people.  
 People are concerned about prices rising.  
 They are making more money that they ever made in the history of oil companies. That's not fair for me. I'm getting tired. Chocola is a bad guy. That is what I got about the ad.  
 Price gauging  
 Billions of dollars in tax breaks.  
 Separation between me -- the common guy-- and the guy who is making money of me. It is the immediacy of the issue. Death taxes are not really on my plate.  
 It's a much more effective tool for today than immigration. That doesn't affect me personally. Money is obviously not a problem for him. Not that I want politicians to be poor, but I want them to be sensitive to my needs.

<b>Hostettler – pay raise/ military</b>	
<b>5 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>4 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>2 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>2 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>3 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>4 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>5 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	

I hated the way it was done, but it was moving and touched a heart string.  
 I thought it was incredible, there has to be something wrong with it.  
 1,500 can pay a rent. It takes care of expenses for a few months.  
 It was an attack done in a soft way, and that appealed to me.  
 It adds to the confusion of issues. You don't have an idea of where he stands. They are not telling us how to solve the problem, but blaming someone else for it.

**Mail – Gerlach**

Too much to read  
 Poorly done  
 Treasury check catches my attention. I like that  
 I don't who it is from  
 Says she made it clear that she would support higher taxes  
 Doesn't seem simple to me  
 Just seniors and families? Don't students out of college need lower taxes too?  
 Very confusing.  
 Ineffective  
 Too much information.

**Mail – Murphy First**

It's clear to me. Well, there is a clear issue. If you are for windfall taxes, vote for him. If not...it's clear where each one works.  
 Clearly she doesn't support big business like oil and gas.  
 There is a personal message from her, and she is saying she is going to do something about it.  
 Require automakers to produce oil efficient cars. Well, they can do that but just don't do it. So good luck Lois.

**Mail - Murphy second**

I thought it was nicer than the other one.  
 The picture in the front is very telling.

Much clearer, it's not as complicated. This picture is very telling. She talks about what she wants to do. And Mr. potato head on the bag...that picture really works, he looks like a fat... She is making the link of big oil vs. families. And I think Gerlach cares about his family too. I like the picture on the front.

**VI. Election Debate (15 minutes)**

Now I'd like to talk in more detail about a couple of specific issues and the role they will play in your decision making in this election.

**TAX AND SPEND**

1. You remember that one of the ads we watched tonight was about taxes, raising questions about the Democratic candidate's position on the issue of taxes. Let's watch it again, just as a reminder.

**[Written Exercise – Handout #10]**

2. We saw a couple Democratic responses to this ad. But now I'd like to look at what some other Democrats are saying about this. So flip to Handout #10 now. I'll read this message out loud, you follow along with me and then rate it, just as you did the ads we watched earlier.

*Democrats say, Americans are struggling to keep up with the skyrocketing costs of gas, health care, and education. President Bush and Jim Gerlach's economic policies have produced record deficits while giving away billions in tax cuts to their corporate backers and shifting the tax burden even further onto the middle class. We should repeal tax giveaways to companies that send jobs overseas and millionaires who don't need relief, and instead pass fiscally responsible middle class tax cuts: making college tuition tax deductible, tax credits for first-time homebuyers, and tax breaks for caregiving expenses on behalf of an aging parent.*

**■ Show of hands, then discuss**

<b>5 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2 Casey/Murphy</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1 Casey/Murphy</b>	
<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>2 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>3 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>4 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	
<b>5 Santorum/Gerlach</b>	

Spoke about a lot more issues that we saw on the advertisement.

There is a specific plan.

Like it.

It's feasible. It's making statements that are feasible.

Now I wish we could made them do it if we voted for them.

I like congress having same insurance as average person.

They say things here that we all can relate to.

They link Bush to Gerlach.

It's a Republican issue. If they used Republican in stead of Bush/ Gerlach it would still be true.

It's her plan on how taxes are going to change, not necessarily raise them.

It's done well the way that is presented. Not to negative.

If they sent me just this, in a post card, I would read this. I would vote for whoever did this.

## SECURITY

### [Written Exercise – Handout #11]

3. Now I want to talk about one other issue and see what candidates from both parties have to say. Again, I'll read them out loud, you rate them, and then we'll discuss. Let's start with the Republican candidate.

*The Republican candidate says, we are making significant progress in Iraq. After holding three successful elections, there is now an Iraqi government with a new constitution, and a quarter of a million Iraqi troops are trained and equipped. But there is still more to do, and the United States can't afford to bail out on Iraq before we complete the mission. If we follow my opponent's advice to cut and run, al Qaeda will have a new terrorist haven in Iraq and the whole world will see that America doesn't have the stomach to fight the war on terror.*

#### ■ Show of hands, then discuss

### [Written exercise – Handout #12]

4. Now, let's hear from a Democratic candidate.

*The Democratic candidate says, we need to chart a new course in Iraq. Our military has done its job in Iraq, and it is now time for Iraqis to take control of their own future. But my opponent and President Bush offer no plan to end the war and are sending even more troops to an urban war zone in Baghdad. With over 2,500 Americans dead and 3 billion dollars a week going to a war that has no end in sight, we need a change in policy. We won't withdraw precipitously or allow terrorist elements to seize control, but we must begin a phased withdrawal of U.S. forces before the end of 2006.*

#### ■ Show of hands, then discuss

## VII. Final Ballot (5 minutes)

### [Written exercise – Handout #13]

1. Finally, I want you to choose, if the election were held today, which one you would vote for – based on everything we've discussed tonight. Circle which candidate you would choose, then briefly write why in the space below. **[Written only]**