

# VETTING

If you've swung by Drudge today, you know the latest manufactured outrage is that Gwen Ifill has a book, *The Breakthrough: Politics and Race in the Age of Obama*, coming out on inauguration day.

Oh no!! A mistrial!!!

Now, frankly, I do think it rather inappropriate for Ifill to moderate this debate, what with the built-in financial incentive she's got to see Obama taking the oath of office on the day her book comes out.

But, as Judd Legum and Michael Calderone argue, it's McCain campaign's own damn fault. Judd writes:

If that's true, it just shows the McCain campaign's incompetence. The debate moderators were agreed to on August 6. Ifill's book was reported in the Associated Press two weeks earlier:

"We have an awkward history about how to talk about race in the nation and in newsrooms," says Gwen Ifill, senior correspondent for PBS' "The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer" and author of *The Breakthrough: Politics and Race in the Age of Obama*, "slated for publication early next year."

But I think Judd is being overly hard on the McCain campaign. Judd must forget that McCain was very very busy in early August, with stuff that was way more important than vetting Ifill. They surely were totally focused on vetting Sarah Palin. Right?

For the record, McCain says Gwen Ifill, who threw mostly softballs for Dick Cheney in 2004, "will do a totally objective job, because she is

a highly respected professional," though he seems to be hedging his right to complain after the fact. Which is no surprise, since they've been working the ref for several days already.