

2020 PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES: THE BATTLE OF NASHVILLE [UPDATE-3]

[NB: Updates will appear at the bottom of this post. /~Rayne]

Here's a post for emptywheel community members' discussion purposes dedicated to what was supposed to be the third and final presidential debates.

The debate is scheduled to begin at 8:00–9:30 p.m. ET – this is earlier than the second debate was scheduled before it was canceled. Tonight's debate will be conducted at the Curb Event Center at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee.

Tonight's moderator is Kristen Welker of NBC, the only woman of the three moderators chosen for the presidential debates. I wouldn't be at all surprised if this is an issue during the course of the debate, especially since it's been a bone of contention that incumbent Senator Mitch McConnell has been reluctant to have a woman moderator for a debate against opponent Amy McGrath.

Good luck to Welker; I hope she's got nerves of steel. She's already had to deal with sideswipes by Trump on Twitter:

She's always been terrible & unfair, just like most of the Fake News reporters, but I'll still play the game. The people know! How's Steve Scully doing? <https://t.co/uS3EWzfFPy>

– Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump)
October 17, 2020

Only surprised Trump and his mini-me loser son

didn't make it about Welker's mixed race heritage (Native American and Black).

Speaking of which, racism may also factor in tonight's debate considering the location – Nashville was built upon a slave economy and was the first Confederate state capital to fall to the Union during the Battle of Nashville in 1864.

The COVID-19 epidemic may likewise figure largely. Nashville was the site of another pandemic which took the life of a former American president. James Polk died of cholera in 1849 only three months after returning to Nashville upon leaving office.

Could lightning strike twice, one might wonder, given how deep we are into another pandemic, this one encouraged by Trump's malign governance.

One factor which might make tonight's debate more challenging for Trump: the decision by the Commission on Presidential Debates to implement a two-minute microphone mute to allow each candidate to answer a question uninterrupted.

The muting will work like this: At the start of each of the six segments of the debate, each candidate will be given two minutes to answer an initial question. During that portion, the opposing candidate's microphone will be muted.

"Under the agreed upon debate rules, each candidate is to have two minutes of uninterrupted time to make remarks at the beginning of each 15 minute segment of the debate. These remarks are to be followed by a period of open discussion," the commission said in a statement. "Both campaigns this week again reaffirmed their agreement to the two-minute, uninterrupted rule."

Team Trump whined this was unfair, of course. Yes, it's really unfair that we're allowed to

hear each candidate answer a question without Trump sowing chaos with unending yelling-at-clouds throughout the debate like he did during the first debate three weeks ago. Expect it, though – his behavior during his interview with Leslie Stahl was a combination of toddler, bully, and mobster:

The president appears rigid with anger or irritation throughout much of this interview, sometimes demanding “next question” when he doesn’t like the topic.

– Chris Megerian (@ChrisMegerian)
October 22, 2020

Hard to believe Trump thought releasing this interview material ahead of the edited 60 Minutes program this weekend would be a benefit to his campaign. Being an asshole to Stahl isn’t going to help him with women voters who haven’t already voted. He’s just so ugly and tiresome, like an overgrown irritable baby in need of a nap.

My god, has it really been three weeks since the first debate? It feels like it’s been a bloody decade. I’ll be so damned glad when tonight’s over and the Union has once again taken Nashville.

~ ~ ~

Election Day is twelve days away. Are you registered? Have you double checked the status of your registration? Have you requested an absentee or mail-in ballot? Have you mailed or dropped off your ballot? Have you checked the status of your ballot if mailed/dropped off?

And have you talked with all your friends and family members to ensure they have done the same? Make plan – register, vote, and help others, but make a plan. And then execute it to win.

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UPDATE-1 – 9:15 P.M. ET –

He didn't let us down. Trump the malignant narcissist, who believes and acts as if everything is about him and him alone, showed up this evening.

Trump walks out looking angry and his face is odd shade of burnt sienna. He blows his 2 minutes to talk about coronavirus by blathering on about himself and how he's cured and "some people say immune." Dumbass.

#Debates2020

– Polly Sigh (@dcpoll) October 23, 2020

Meanwhile, 222,620 Americans have died from COVID as of the beginning of tonight's debate. Americans are dying at a rate of 45-50 per hour, which means at least one American died while he blathered for two minutes about himself.

Revolting excuse for leadership.

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UPDATE-2 – 9:55 P.M. ET –

This is why I can't watch Trump. Not at rallies, not in debates. When he gets a mic he lies and it hurts Americans.

I'm a stage 4 cancer survivor. Donald Trump is coming for my health care, and yours too. He has NO PLAN to protect us. He's been promising to protect people w/ pre-existing conditions for years, it's just lies. <https://t.co/o9bzpoQqPV>

#Debates2020 #debates

– Laura Packard (@lpackard) October 23, 2020

He's lied again tonight about his health care plan we've yet to see in +3.5 years. He's preparing to take the Affordable Care Act in front of the Supreme Court within days so his

stacked jurists can kill it along with more Americans.

Meanwhile, even more Americans have died from COVID over the last 40 minutes – an estimated 30 more families will be told their loved ones didn't make it. For every one of these deaths there are at least 50 new cases of COVID, a number of whom will end up with long-term disability due to damage ranging from their lungs to their testicles.

And he'll keep lying about health care for all of them just as he's lied to Laura Packard.

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UPDATE-3 – 10:45 P.M. ET –

Accurate.

Trump saying "I know more about wind" is literally the only true thing he's said tonight. #HotAir

– Sally Kohn (@sallykohn) October 23, 2020

Blowhard knows blowing hard.

Numerous accounts say Biden stuck the landing with his closing. Tell me in comments who's got it right before the media proceeds to tell us what happened.