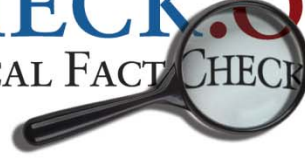




FACTCHECK.ORG
ANNENBERG POLITICAL FACT CHECK



JUST THE FACTS!

TITLE: "COURT WATCH!: WISCONSIN EDITION"

EPISODE #: 8

HOST

Welcome back to Just the Facts, the weekly vid-cast from FactCheck.org, I'm Emi Kolawole, and this episode is officially now in session.

GRAPHIC: COURT WATCH

This week we turn away from the presidential race and take a look at two nasty judicial ads to start off our new series called "Court Watch." You may think that when states elect judges the campaigns would be steer clear of tampering with the evidence or giving false testimony. But just take a look at what's going on in Wisconsin, where the race is heating up over a state Supreme Court seat.

VIDEO: GREATER WISCONSIN COMMITTEE AD (NO AUDIO)

This first ad from a liberal group implies that Mike Gableman – the challenger - bought a circuit court appointment from a Republican governor.

VIDEO: GREATER WISCONSIN COMMITTEE AD

ANNOUNCER

...but weeks before the selection, Gableman hosted a fundraiser for Gov. Scott McCallum and gave him \$1,250. Guess who McCallum picked? Gableman. Tell Mike Gableman we need higher ethical standards for our judges.

HOST

The facts in the ad are correct, but they don't support the insinuation that Judge Gableman is an unethical judge -- circumstantial evidence, sure, but proof of wrongdoing? No.

GRAPHIC: JCIC QUOTE

The Judicial Campaign Integrity Committee, an independent watchdog, says the ad unfairly impugns Judge Gableman's integrity because it implies, without explicitly

stating, that Judge Gableman somehow committed an ethical lapse in the events leading to his appointment...the ad does not substantiate this claim.

This second ad from the conservative Coalition for America's Families attacks incumbent state Supreme Court Justice, Louis Butler.

VIDEO: COALITION FOR AMERICA'S FAMILIES AD (NO AUDIO)

A dead body, bloody fingernails, surveillance footage, and, of course, the Scary Narrator voice all make for one nasty attack ad. But let's see if it's accurate.

VIDEO: COALITION FOR AMERICA'S FAMILIES AD

ANNOUNCER

Ralph Armstrong was a convicted rapist out on parole, when he raped, beat and strangled a 19-year old co-ed to death. There was eyewitness testimony, fingerprints at the crime scene and blood under Armstrong's fingernails. But Louis Butler wrote the decision to overturn this rapist's conviction.

HOST

Butler wrote a 4-to-3 decision reversing Armstrong's conviction in a 27-year-old murder trial. But the ad leaves out this bit of information – that the reason the court ordered a new trial was because new DNA evidence knocked out a key part of the case against Armstrong.

So the next time you see one of these appeals to fear, sit back, grab a teddy bear if you need, and ask yourself, does the ad provide you with enough information to support the verdict – beyond a reasonable doubt?

And that's it for this episode of Just the Facts! For more information be sure to check out our Web site at www.factcheck.org. I'm Emi Kolawole, and this episode is officially adjourned.