

Dems debate 'YouTube' users' questions

by UPI

CHARLESTON, S.C. -- Eight U.S. Democratic presidential contenders Monday, for the first time ever, debated questions submitted by questioners via the Internet Web site YouTube. The candidates were called upon to respond to dozens of insightful questions from regular Americans rather than the usual format of questioning by members of the media or nonpartisan organizations. The debate in Charleston, S.C., was organized and carried live by CNN. CNN whittled about 3,000 videos submitted to the network down to 39. Sen. Mike Gravel of Alaska said U.S. soldiers died in vain in Vietnam and are doing so in Iraq. Sen. Joe Biden of Delaware questioned the mental stability of one young man who asked about gun control while referring to his rifle as his "baby." Sen. Barack Obama of Illinois was asked whether he was black enough and Sen. Hillary Clinton of New York whether being a woman would hurt her when dealing with nations that do not accord women many rights. Sen. Chris Dodd of Connecticut stressed his experience in Washington and New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson pushed bipartisanship. Former North Carolina Sen. John Edwards was put on the spot about his position on gay marriage and Rep. Dennis Kucinich of Ohio strengthened his position as leader of the party's left wing.

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