Gender and Message

I am sure you have heard by now that Charlie Gibson is stepping down from the anchor position at ABC World News and that Diane Sawyer will be taking his place come January. It was probably Charlie's time to go, he looked tired and somewhat out of touch. I am not a huge Diane Sawyer fan, although I think she will do well in the slot. However, is Diane going to be judged solely by her accomplishments? No. Absolutely not. She will be judged by her gender. It has already started. All the talk about how "historic" it is that now there will two female evening news anchors, blah blah blah. I have news for all (mostly male) pundits and TV critics out there: It is 2009. There are women everywhere. This is not news. Katie Couric is in third place not because she is a woman, but because she has a bad delivery for news, in my opinion. Diane has much more gravitas. But it will be inevitable that they will be compared on things like appearance and clothing.

UPDATE: Carole Simpson opines that Diane Sawyer being promoted to network news is too little, too late. Simpson thinks that network news is in tremendous decline, and that with women at the helm, they may end up being blamed. Interesting take. Here's the link to her piece on CNN.

Gender is old news. For Generation Y especially (not that they watch the evening news) the idea of judging someone based on something innate like gender, race or sexual orientation is anathema. So here's a plea to all the old fogies that are stirring up flames about how amazing it is that there will two female anchors—drop it! Concentrate on real news. Judge all anchors on their ability to deliver the news, on their editorial choices and not on the shape of their genitals.

It was Marshall McLuhan who said the medium is the message. Well, the message is the message. Here's a piece from CNN on

how Obama is losing the health care fight because of social media. No, Obama is losing the health care fight because his MESSAGE is not resonating. It is not the medium, it is the message.

Thoughts?